



# THE BRAILLE MONITOR

Voice of the  
National Federation of the Blind

OCTOBER - 1970

The National Federation of the Blind is not an organization speaking for the blind—it is the blind speaking for themselves.

## THE BRAILLE MONITOR

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If you or a friend wish to remember the National Federation of the Blind in your will, you can do so by employing the following language:

"I give, devise, and bequeath unto NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND,  
a District of Columbia non-profit corporation, the sum of \$\_\_\_ (or,  
"\_\_\_ percent of my net estate", or "the following stocks and bonds: \_\_\_") to  
be used for its worthy purposes on behalf of blind persons and to be held and  
administered by direction of its Executive Committee."

If your wishes are more complex, you may have your attorney communicate with the Berkeley Office for other suggested forms.

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## WHERE HAVE ALL THE FLOWERS GONE?

by  
Kenneth Jernigan

[Editor's Note: Among his many other activities the NFB President has been in great demand as a speaker at commencements and other important occasions before civic groups. This spring he addressed over twenty thousand people at various public events. Following is the paper he delivered on August 18 at the Western Iowa Technical College Commencement, which may give the reader some notion as to the source of his popularity.]

*The words of the prophets are  
written on the subway walls.*

Remember that line? It was spoken, or rather sung, by a couple of popular prophets of our own time known as Simon and Garfunkel. If you don't remember the song-called "The Sound of Silence"--I'm sure you will recall the movie in which it appeared: "The Graduate."

It was a movie about an unfortunate young man who was burdened with a college degree and cursed with well-to-do parents. So, as you know, he had little to live for or look forward to until he found a girl, equally culturally disadvantaged, with whom he could run away--just as she was getting married to somebody else.

In that film there was another song, even more memorable. Among its imperishable lines was the question, "Where have you gone, Joe DiMaggio? A nation turns its lonely eyes to you (Ooo ooo ooo)." There is a message for us there; but if it isn't altogether clear let me recall to you these further lines from the same lyric:

*Sitting on a sofa  
On a Sunday afternoon  
Going to the candidates' debate.  
Laugh about it*

*Shout about it  
When you're got to choose  
Every way you look at it you lose.*

Every way you look at it you lose. If the choice is not great, if the debate is not profound, there's nothing to be done. You can't change the system, it would seem; you can't work for better candidates; you can't get in the fight yourself; you just lose. But it's all right. Even when you've lost, according to the words of these prophets, all is not lost. There is still the sound of silence; the celebration of despair, the cry of alienation, the wail of self-pity. Listen to the same prophets in another of their odes:

*So I looked at the scenery,  
She read her magazine;  
And the moon rose over an open field.  
"Kathy, I'm lost," I said.  
Though I knew she was sleeping.  
"I'm empty and aching and  
I don't know why."*

Those are the words of the prophets--today's prophets--written not on the subway walls but in the popular songs. The new music, the rock-folk-popular culture of youth, was never more expressive or more revealing. The medium is the message. The sound is far from silent. It is loud and clear. In that music

are the tone, the mood, the dominant theme of the generation which produces and consumes it.

Here is another version of that theme, as stated by the Beatles:

*In the morning wanna die  
In the evening wanna die  
If I ain't dead already  
Ooh girl you know the reason why . . .*

*Black cloud crossed my mind  
Blue mist round my soul  
Feel so suicidal  
Even hate my rock and roll  
Wanna die yeah wanna die  
If I ain't dead already  
Ooh girl you know the reason why*

In another phrase of the same song, the Beatles say they feel "just like Dylan's Mr. Jones—lonely wanna die." Bob Dylan, the Beatles, Simon and Garfunkel—all feel lonely and wanna die. Or so they keep telling us. But why? Why, in the flush of youth, do they think of death? Why, in the age of affluence and the presence of plenty, do they speak of emptiness? Why, in a time of greater freedom and fewer limits upon youth than ever before, do they feel oppression?

Where have all the flowers gone?

I think I know part of the answer, at least—and I am sure you do too. Part of the answer is that, for all our affluence and plenty, this is not the best of times and the most perfect of worlds. It is instead a time of troubles, and a world so polluted, plundered, poisoned, and populated that it is tempting to regard it as rotten to the core.

Moreover, our problems are not diminishing but multiplying—not being solved or even coped with but neglected and put off. The price of our neglect—and of our greed and ignorance and abuse—may be more than all of humanity can pay; yet, we are still buying time. More than that: we are still polluting, still contaminating, still populating without check. We can no longer say with the poet that there is "world enough and time." Time is running out on us, and there is not world enough for the three billion human beings now upon it, let alone the billions more (the children of today's children) who are scheduled to arrive during the next generation.

If Pearl Buck were to have written her famous novel last month rather than thirty years ago, could she still entitle it *THE GOOD EARTH*? I think not; but I can recall some other book titles which would be more accurate and more relevant. For example, these: *OUR PLUNDERED PLANET*; *THE ASPHALT JUNGLE*; *THE NEON WILDERNESS*; *THE AIR-CONDITIONED NIGHTMARE*; *THE DEATH OF PRIVACY*; and, last but not least, *THE ABOLITION OF MAN*. Those titles embody facts about us as we are, and premonitions of what we might become, which are clearly and impatiently recognized by the not-so-meek who are about to inherit the earth.

That is an obvious part of the explanation, then, for the present phenomenon of rebellion, resistance, and resentment among American youth today. The world they perceive and confront is not of their choosing nor of their liking. They have fair reason to feel, like Housman's hero, "alone and afraid in a world they never made." But if there is

reason in their rebellion, there is also—all too often—madness in their method. For the method of reacting and resisting on the part of sensitized youth is more and more characterized, I fear, by what we might call the *psychology of negativism*. This negativism is expressed alike in the “lonely wanna die” refrain of the pop-rock lyric, with its sweeping rejection of the world and of life itself, and also in the destructive violence of radical protest which strikes out indiscriminately at the symptoms, institutions, traditions, and foundations of existing society. Total rebellion goes hand in hand with total withdrawal. The hippie and the Yippie are two sides of the same coin; one represents the *passive* and the other the *active* phase of the “cop-out” cult of negativism. In both phases the underlying attitude is one of cynicism and pervasive disbelief—a fashionable air of disillusionment and disenchantment, of jaded senses and deadened spirit—almost of premature senility.

Where have all the flowers gone?  
Maybe they are dead.

Listen, if you will, to the words of one of the most popular songs on the charts in recent months, made famous on records by Peggy Lee. This is how it goes:

*I remember when I was a very little girl . . . our house caught on fire . . . I'll never forget the look on my father's face as he gathered me up in his arms and raced through the burning building out onto the pavement . . . I stood there shivering in my pajamas . . . and watched the whole world go up in flames . . . And when it was all over . . . I said to myself, 'Is that all there is to a fire?'*

*Is that all there is? Is that all there is?  
If that's all there is, my friends, then let's  
keep dancing. Let's break out the booze,  
and have a ball: If that's all there is.*

*And when I was twelve years old my  
father took me to the circus . . . the  
Greatest Show on Earth . . . there were  
clowns and elephants and dancing  
bears . . . and a beautiful lady in pink  
tights flew high above our heads . . . and as  
I sat there watching the marvelous  
spectacle . . . I had the feeling that  
something was missing . . . I don't know  
what, but when it was over . . . I said to  
myself, 'Is that all there is to a circus?'*

*Then I fell in love . . . head over heels  
in love with the most wonderful boy in  
the world . . . we would take long walks  
by the river . . . or just sit for hours gazing  
into each other's eyes . . . we were so very  
much in love . . . Then one day . . . he  
went away . . . and I thought I'd die . . .  
but I didn't . . . and when I didn't . . . I  
said to myself, 'Is that all there is to love?'*

*I know what you must be saying to  
yourselves . . . If that's the way she feels  
about it, why doesn't she just end it all . . .  
Oh, no . . . not me . . . I'm in no hurry for  
that final disappointment . . . for I know  
just as well as I'm standing here talking to  
you . . . that when that final moment  
comes and I'm breathing my last  
breath . . . I'll be saying to myself . . . 'Is  
that all there is? All . . . there . . . is?'*

I take it that the great popularity of that song among the younger generation reflects a widespread approval of its philosophy of life. In fact, one of my students told me the other day, “I don't much like the music, but I sure do like the message.” If his reaction is at all typical,

what a commentary it is on the state of mind and spirit of youth. Perhaps that sad lyric does not describe anyone here today; but whoever does endorse it, whoever digs that scene and buys that message, is surely a new and different breed: "something else," if I may say so, and "outsight."

The person described by that song is only half-alive, for even his own death is regarded as an anticlimax. Life for him is a succession of disappointments, of hopes betrayed, of promises broken, and of great expectations unfulfilled. Even love and tragedy—which is to say, genuine human feeling and experience—fail to move or change him; and this failure he projects outward onto the world. The world has failed him; life has failed him. The one possibility he does not admit is that the colossal failure may be his own. But that is of course exactly what it is: a failure of nerve, of will, and of imagination. It is a failure of the self to reach, a failure to give, a failure to care, a failure to dare.

Where have all the flowers gone?  
Where is the bloom of youth we thought we knew—the commitment, confidence, conviction, and concern? Not here, surely, in this slough of despond.

The symptoms of this antiheroic hedonism are classically familiar. They are those of "La Dolce Vita"—of the Empty **Life** of Perpetual Fun and Games. "If **that's** all there is, my friends, then let's keep dancing. Let's break out the booze, and have a ball: if that's all there is."

Well, if that's all there is, my friends, then we have advanced not one moral inch since the decline and fall of the Roman Empire, when the cry of the lounging leisure-class was a paraphrase of Peggy

Lee's: "Eat, drink, and be merry—for tomorrow we die." They ate—as you know from your history books—and they drank, but they were not really merry. And not only did they die, but their civilization died with them. And they never knew, those effete snobs and frivolous fatcats, that they perished from their own gluttony, by their own failure of nerve, in the stews of their moral cowardice. They never knew that theirs was the classic example of what our social scientists call the "self-fulfilling prophecy."

May I remind you of that elementary lesson in psychology, without sounding too much like the worst and dullest of your schoolmasters? There are some kinds of prophecies, such as the systematic forecast of rain tomorrow, which are wholly objective—we usually call them "scientific"—and which bear little relation to our needs or hopes or wishes. But there are other kinds of prophecies which tend to be self-fulfilling or self-validating—such as the prophecy of Hitler and the Nazis that men are war-like creatures destined to do battle against one another. (Of course, the Nazis were poor prophets in terms of the ultimate winners.) The point is that Hitler helped his prophecy to become a reality because he believed and acted upon it. And the more cogent point is that those who choose to believe that the world is evil, or at best indifferent, help to make it so by their behavior. On the other hand, those who choose to believe that the world holds the possibility of good, or at least of improvement, help to make it so by their actions.

Does that not make some kind of sense? If you believe (perhaps because of ulcers or an unfortunate childhood) that men are hateful to one another, is it not

likely that you will lead them to be hateful to you, thereby confirming your prejudice? If you believe that black people are biologically and intellectually inferior, is it not likely that you will seek to arrange your social institutions to allow for that--and so in fact give reinforcement to the belief? If you believe that all white people are bigots and racists, is it not likely that you will see a fascist pig in every pokey, and thereby call out the response you anticipate? If you believe that every middle-aged person is a soulless hypocrite unable to work for good or that every member of the younger generation is a slob and a cop-out, then are your actions not likely to help evoke that very response?

That is the process, not just of the self-fulfilling prophecy, but of what one eminent social critic has called the "vicious circle" of prejudice. On its affirmative side, however, this process may also describe a "*virtuous circle*"--which is to say that *good* prophecies or beliefs, as well as *bad* ones, may be reinforced and "made true" by virtue of our acting upon them.

To return to our song, if you choose to believe "that's all there is" to life and love and death, then for you that is all there ever will be. (I might go farther, in the spirit of the lyric, and point out that to keep on dancing, break out the booze, and have a ball hardly meets the issue; because when the music has ended, and the booze is gone, and the ball is over, you will surely be asking yourself: "Is that all there is?")

On the other hand, if you choose not to ask the question at all--or, having asked it, to answer it yourself with a resounding

"No"--then the world and the future, the purpose of life and the chance of fulfilling it, all take on a different and favorable aspect.

The difference in outlook is much like that between the pessimist who maintains that his glass is half-empty and the optimist who believes that it is half-full. The difference is not one of quantity but of quality.

There is a familiar Biblical saying that God created man in His own image. There is also a newer, less respectable saying that man created God in *his* image. I propose to you a variation on that theme: which is that *man makes himself in his own image*--not once only, in fixed and final form, but over and over--and not himself only, but his culture and his institutions and his government. The crisis we are in today does not arise from the fact that man is a helpless pawn in the fell clutch of circumstance; the difficulty is rather in the frightening immensity of the powers we possess over ourselves and our environment--or, more exactly, in the radical disproportion between the *powers* we hold and the *wisdom* with which we dispense them.

The real "gap" in our contemporary culture is not between the generations. It is not between the races. It is not between the classes. It is not between the right and the left. The real gap is between the values of *technology*, now unchecked and out of control, and the values of *humanity*, now disarmed and out of power. Unless man can regain control over the great machine (which he somehow failed to create in his own image)--and unless man can regain control over himself in terms of humility, humanity, and harmony--the cultural gap

which confronts us today will become a chasm into which we will surely plunge to our collective death.

No: that is not all there is, my friends—neither to the reality nor to the possibility. The choice is wider and the options are livelier than those melancholy minstrels whom we have quoted comprehend. There is something better “blowin’ in the wind;” and the wind is rising. The old revolution of negativism, the total rebellion without a cause, does not now occupy the youth scene alone; there is a new revolution of hope, as the psychologist Erich Fromm has called it, gathering strength in the grass roots and spreading contagiously across the campuses. Young people, and many people no longer young, are beginning to hear a different drummer—playing a distant music in a new and higher key.

Here is one version of this new counterpoint—as stated by the Beatles (those constantly growing and shifting weathervanes):

*You say you want a revolution  
Well you know  
we all want to change the world  
You tell me that it's evolution  
Well you know  
We all want to change the world  
But when you talk about destruction  
Don't you know it's gonna be alright  
Alright Alright  
You say you got a real solution  
Well you know  
we'd all love to see the plan  
You ask me for a contribution  
Well you know  
We're doing what we can  
But when you want money  
for people with minds that hate*

*All I can tell you is  
brother you have to wait  
Don't you know it's gonna be alright  
Alright Alright  
You say you'll change the constitution  
Well you know  
we all want to change your head  
You tell me it's the institution  
Well you know  
You better free your mind instead  
But if you go carrying  
pictures of Chairman Mao  
You ain't going to make it  
with anyone anyhow  
Don't you know it's gonna be alright  
Alright Alright.*

Even more recent (and, perhaps, even more in keeping with the new mood sweeping the country) is another song. This one, done by Mama Cass, is right on target.

*There's a new world comin'  
And it's just around the bend.  
There's a new world comin'  
This one's comin' to an end.  
There's a new voice callin'  
You can hear it if you try,  
And it's growin' stronger  
With each day that passes by.*

*There's a brand new mornin'  
Risin' clear and sweet and free.  
There's a new day dawnin'  
That belongs to you and me.  
Yes, a new world's comin'  
The one we've had visions of  
Comin' in peace  
Comin' in joy  
Comin' in love.*

Where have all the flowers gone?  
Look again: they're coming up through  
the polluted earth of our greed and

arrogance, through the cracks in the old dogmas, pushing up against the dead weight of obsolete formulae and outmoded ideologies. They are the flowers of spring and renewal, harbingers of a new season and a new age. It was a young American writer of an earlier generation, Thomas Wolfe, who best captured this sense of regeneration and reaffirmation—who spoke of “wandering forever and the earth again—of seed-time, bloom, and the mellow-dropping harvest; and of the big flowers, the rich flowers, the strange unknown flowers.”

But the analogy of the seasons and the flowers is finally inadequate, because it conveys a false assurance and certainty. There is nothing at all certain about the course of thought and action, of premises and postures, on the part of youth or their elders over the months and years ahead. All that is certain is that this is the first time in the history of the world when mankind has possessed the power to eliminate all life (present and future) from our planet or to create a virtual paradise beyond the dreams of any previous generation. All that is certain is that we have come to a crossroads, a critical choice-point in our onrushing career as a nation and world. It is, surely, a crisis of consciousness; just possibly it is a crisis of conscience as well. The age of innocence is ended, and the days of wine and roses are numbered. We know now that we cannot afford either to slip backward into rugged planlessness or to march forward into ragged anarchy. We shall need to concert our human resources in order to conserve our natural resources; we shall need to take the emphasis off motherhood and place it on brotherhood; we shall have to articulate a new philosophy of *work*, not as the toil of slaves nor the ordeal of

sinners but as the proud vocation of free men; and we shall require a new generation not of vipers or vandals (forever protesting and refusing and inquiring if *that* is all there is) but a generation of seekers of the dream and keepers of the faith and lovers of humanity.

It will take all we have and all we know—this I do believe—just to make it to the threshold of the next century, no more than a rounded generation away. But it is not sufficient to speak of survival. Man does not wish only to exist; he aspires to live. It is easy enough, as William Faulkner argued twenty years ago in his Nobel Prize address, to say that man is immortal simply because he will endure—“that when the last ding-dong of doom has clanged and faded from the last worthless rock hanging tideless in the last red and dying evening, that even then there will still be one more sound: that of his puny inexhaustible voice, still talking. I refuse to accept this [he said]. I believe that man will not only endure; he will prevail. He is immortal because he has a soul, a spirit capable of compassion and sacrifice and endurance.”

We can make it, surely, if we will. We can make it beyond survival, beyond 1984—beyond the Gross Society and even the Great Society into the Good Society. But we can go that distance only if we come together; we can make it only if we choose love over anger, dialogue over disruption, reunion over resistance.

And that, in the words of the prophets Simon and Garfunkel, will really be making it. Here is the way they put it:

*I've just been fakin' it,*

*I'm not really makin' it.  
This feeling of fakin' it--  
I still haven't shaken it "*

The question before you, my friends, on this day of decision, is not "Is That All There Is?" The question is: do you want to be a part of the problem, or a part of the solution? Do you want only to fake it,

or to try to make it?

It's up to you; but do not delay too long in making up your minds. In the words of another prophet, Norbert Wiener, the founder of cybernetics and father of the computer: "The hour is late, and the choice of good and evil knocks at our door."

\* \* \* \* \*

## CHANGING THE NAME WON'T HELP

The House of Representatives passed H. R. 16311 in April, this being the President's so-called welfare reform bill known as the Family Assistance Plan of 1970. The main thrust of this measure is to abolish the Aid to Families with Dependent Children program and substitute for it the Family Assistance Plan (FAP), with the floor of \$1,600 a year for a family of four, with mandatory work registration and training features. But the change of name won't help.

There can be no doubt that America is at the cross-roads in dealing with public welfare. The present system as a whole has fallen into disrepute with the public, the press, the legislators, and most of all, with the recipients. The causes are many. However, chief among them are the inability of public welfare administrators, state and national, to make good on their assurances to the Congress of decreased caseloads by means of the Service Amendments of 1956 and 1962; and the thoroughly discredited practice of individual need individually determined, with its corollary of a minute and

demoralizing investigation of all income and resources.

Over the years even the public welfare administrators could see the writing on the wall. The mounting dissatisfaction in State legislative bodies and in the Congress over mounting caseloads and costs, especially in the AFDC program, and the lack of any imaginative approaches by the administrators, combined to lead to the 1956 Amendments to the Social Security Act, incorporating provisions for self-support and self-care.

While the 1956 Amendments thus added constructive elements and a positive approach to the administration of public assistance, most of the states were slow in implementing the new emphasis. The Federal Government sought to supply motivation six years later with the 1962 Amendments which greatly increased the ratio of Federal financial participation in the costs of services. This was done, however, by over-selling the Congress, promising that the increased outlay of

Federal funds for services and research projects would result in reduced caseloads. However, by 1970—eight years after increased Federal funds were brought into play to encourage the decreasing of dependency through “services” and “research”—such was not the case. On the contrary, all categories of public assistance except Aid to the Blind continued to increase in numbers and in cost, particularly the AFDC program. Realizing that public welfare administrators had failed to fulfill their bright promises of 1956 and 1962, the Congress in 1967 placed responsibility for job training and placement of recipients of public assistance in the hands of the Labor Department.

Between 1967 and 1970 public welfare administrators, in a last desperate effort, reorganized their staffs into two groups, those providing services and those concerned with income-maintenance. This artificial division will not achieve the goal of markedly reducing dependency and completely loses sight of the fact that the greatest single service is to provide the needy recipient with a reasonably adequate amount of cash with which to purchase the necessities of life. So it is not surprising that the country today is moving rapidly away from public welfare grants and administration of public assistance toward some sort of guaranteed annual income.

Most of the criticism of public assistance has been generated by the AFDC program. It has risen in size of caseloads and costs to the point where many States find it almost impossible to finance further expansions. Its rolls are heavily weighted with individuals belonging to minority groups and who, for the most part, are unskilled and have a low potential for job training and placement. Also, a large proportion of the recipients have serious physical and emotional problems in addition to being poor and untrained to earn a living. Thus the dream of training and placing these persons in competitive employment is quite largely illusory.

The AFDC program does not deserve the public animosity which it has generated. This category of public assistance has become, over the years, a sort of “catch all” for those persons for whom our increasingly automated and complex society has failed to provide economic opportunities—opportunities which only the Federal Government can provide by becoming their employer.

Thus, if and when the Family Assistance Plan is enacted into law, within a few short years it will draw to itself the same opprobrium as the present Aid to Families with Dependent Children program has drawn. No, changing the name from AFDC to FAP won't help.

\* \* \* \* \*

## WHAT IS A SEPARATE AGENCY?

[Editor's Note: That President Jernigan's article which appeared in the July issue of *The Braille Monitor*, “The Separate

Agency for the Blind—Why and Where” has had a great impact is illustrated by the following correspondence with A. E.

Towne, Administrator of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation in the Wisconsin Department of Health and Social Services.]

July 29, 1970

Dear Mr. Jernigan:

Your article in the July issue of *The Braille Monitor* concerning the administrative location of blind programs is informative and interesting. With respect to the statements concerning Wisconsin, however, it is inaccurate, incomplete, and misleading.

First, there has never been a separate agency for the blind in Wisconsin. Services for the blind were, until 1968, incorporated in the Division of Public Assistance in the State Department of Public Welfare.

On July 1, 1968, the entire activity was transferred to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation in the Department of Health and Social Services. The Statutory Advisory Committee for the Blind and the Wisconsin Council for the Blind were involved in the planning for this transfer. These groups were assured that a strong effort would be made to improve all services to Wisconsin's blind population. In view of events since the transfer, I ask you to judge whether this is taking place:

1. At the time of the transfer in 1968, the blind bureau had not had a new position approved in 17 years. This includes supervisory and counseling staff, social service staff, and business enterprises. The first budget under

Vocational Rehabilitation provided for the addition of 2 new vocational rehabilitation counselors, 6 new clerical positions, and 4 social service counselors. It also provided funds for a management study of the Workshop for the Blind in Milwaukee by Booz, Allen and Hamilton, Inc., which has now been completed. The budget for the coming biennium, now in preparation, provides for four additional counselors, plus many other features such as computerizing the Blind Register, a new visual aid program, a Blind Homemaker Aid Program, and the use of new informational media-newsletter, quarterly bulletins, etc.

2. On July 1, 1970, the counselors for the blind were attached to the district office staffs for housekeeping purposes; e.g., payroll, vacation, and sick leave records. They are also included in all staff conferences and training opportunities, plus award proceedings such as "Counselor of the Year" and representation on the Counselor Advisory Committee.

3. Prior to July 1, 1970, *all* vocational rehabilitation training plans developed by counselors for the blind were mailed to Milwaukee for review and approval by a central supervisor. This process commonly involved two months time and sometimes as long as four to six months. On July 1, all experienced counselors who have demonstrated appropriate judgment were given the right to develop and approve their own plans and to commit case service funds. This is consistent with the authority given counselors in the general program. (The salary ranges are also identical.)

4. The supervisory staff of the Bureau for the Blind retains the right to

select all personnel, to review and consult on all case work matters, to recommend merit salary increases and disciplinary actions. They also assess individual and group training needs and are involved in the staff development program. All counselors for the blind have the privilege to call or write directly to the supervisory staff of the Bureau for the Blind at all times.

5. All of the foregoing steps were deliberated upon and accepted by the Wisconsin Council for the Blind and our Blind Advisory Committee. The administrative procedural changes were discussed with and *unanimously* approved by our counseling staff for the blind.

6. The Wisconsin Division of Vocational Rehabilitation inherited a lagging blind agency which had drifted without purpose for many years, was encumbered by archaic case work procedures, and which was beset by problems of staff morale. Most importantly, it was strongly resistant to change in any form. The truth and validity of this assessment can easily be verified by those in position to judge; i.e., the federal RS blind service, National Industries for the Blind, etc.

7. I have taken the time to write this letter because I feel that it is grossly unfair for your article to give the impression that conditions in Wisconsin are deteriorating when, in fact, the exact opposite is true. The outlook for improved service to our blind has never been better. The sad part of the picture is that the sorely needed improvement has to come over the resistance of certain of the blind population.

Sincerely yours,

A. E. Towne, Administrator  
DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL  
REHABILITATION

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August 20, 1970

Dear Mr. Towne:

I have your thoughtful letter of July 29 concerning my article in the July *Monitor*, and I appreciate your taking the time to write to me. Certainly I would not wish to give anything other than a true picture of the situation existing in your state. However, I cannot agree either with your data or your point of view. In fact, I submit that your letter proves the truth of what I said in my article. By your own statement Wisconsin certainly *did* have a separate agency for the blind before it was absorbed by general rehabilitation. If you will look at my article again, you will find that I say: "For the past couple of decades approximately three-fourths of the states have had separate agencies for the blind in one form or another—that is, the programs of rehabilitation for the blind have been administered separately from those for the remainder of the disabled. Relatively few of these separate agencies have had what one might regard as the ideal organizational structure." Even though Wisconsin did not have a Commission for the Blind, it had a separate agency within the terms of what I was discussing.

Further, your letter substantiates my statements concerning the details of the events which occurred. Formerly, officials of the Bureau for the Blind had

administrative control over the counselors for the blind. The program was administered separately from the program of rehabilitation for the remainder of the disabled. Then the Bureau for the Blind was removed from the Department of Welfare and placed under General Rehabilitation. At first it maintained its separate identity and administrative integrity. It could work to meet the special needs of the blind, even though probably restricted by its new setting and the attitudes of the general rehabilitation officials, who apparently felt and feel that there are no special problems connected with blindness, consequently no special needs to be met.

Once the new regime was firmly established, the next step was taken. You yourself tell the story. You say that the head of the Bureau of Services for the Blind can consult, with you, and recommend; but you do not deny that he has been stripped of all administrative or advisory authority. In fact, you confirm that he is a mere consultant, regardless of what his title may be.

You justify all of this by pointing to new staff positions created and increased budget available for the program. The point of my article is not that general rehabilitation agencies or super-departments of government cannot get money but that they do not have the expertise effectively to administer programs for the blind. Your letter also reveals that many of the people in the Bureau for the Blind and many of the blind themselves were resistant to the change.

It is certainly understandable that you would think the new setup progressive and constructive. It is also, perhaps, understandable that many of the blind would think otherwise. In other words I think that what was said in the article was precisely accurate and that a real disservice was done to the blind of your state by the reorganization which occurred.

Very truly yours,

Kenneth Jernigan, President  
National Federation of the Blind

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## NORTH DAKOTA CONVENTION

by  
Judy Saunders

A small but enthusiastic group of Federationists gathered at the Gardner Hotel in Fargo, June 6-7, for the 1970 convention of the Federated Blind of North Dakota. Representing the NFB at the convention was Manuel Urena, Assistant Director of the Iowa Commission for the Blind in Des Moines.

Along with an inspiring banquet address, Mr. Urena spoke at one of the business sessions on a variety of topics, including the history and development of the Iowa Commission for the Blind, activities of the Federation on the national level, and the philosophical trends toward blindness of governmental and private agencies for the

blind throughout the country.

Besides Mr. Urena, other guests from Iowa included Mr. Bob Phelps, Rehabilitation Counselor from the Iowa Commission, and three students who are presently in training at the Iowa Orientation Center. They told members of the organization of their plans after finishing their work at the Center. Prentice Putnam plans to become a computer programmer, Ivan Stillinger is a former postal employee and intends to return to his work; and Becky Smay will be attending college.

A second speaker at the convention was Dr. T. I. Messenger of Grand Forks. He represented the Northeast District chapter of the FBND. Dr. Messenger is a professor in the Department of Philosophy

at the University of North Dakota. In his address he made a comparison between the organized blind movement and that of other minority groups in their activities, goals, and philosophies.

Highlighting this year's convention was the election of officers for the coming term. The following five people pledged to work closely with each other, as well as with the membership of the organization and leaders of the NFB to improve and strengthen in every way possible the North Dakota affiliate: President, Dr. Curtis Saunders, a chiropractor from Devils Lake; First Vice President, Mr. Lorge Gotto, a retired businessman from Fargo; Second Vice President, Mrs. Ray McCormick, a nurse's aide in a Devils Lake nursing home; Secretary, Dr. Messenger; and Treasurer, Mrs. Elsie Teigland, a secretary in Fargo.

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## READING MACHINES

[Reprinted from the *DBPH News*, published by the Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped of the Library of Congress.]

For many years scientists and engineers have been experimenting with electronic devices that would enable blind persons to "read" printed material directly. The first reading machine, as these devices are commonly referred to, was the "Optophone" invented around 1914. It consisted of a scanning head which moved mechanically over lines of print. The scanning head contained light spots which distinguished between the varying forms of printed letters and emitted tones to correspond to the letters

"read." It was necessary for the person using the device to first learn to identify all the different tones as letters or parts of letters. While "Optophone" never went beyond the experimental stage, the principles of its operation are being applied in current research on reading machines.

One reading machine that has received wide publicity recently is the "Opticon" developed by John C. Linvill at the Stanford Research Institute, Menlo

Park, California. The "Opticon" electronically transforms a printed letter into a tactile image. A probe moves across a line of print, transmitting the image of each letter to a group of pins that move to form an outline of the letter. The reader's fingers, held over the pins, feel the outline of each letter. The inventor's daughter, Miss Candy Linvill, has achieved a reading speed of approximately sixty words a minute with the "Opticon."

Mauch Laboratories of Dayton, Ohio has developed the "Visotoner" for the Veterans Administration. Like the "Opticon," it utilizes photoelectric cells which scan one line of print at a time. Instead of a tactile image, the "Visotoner" transforms the letter images into tonal patterns which one can learn to interpret through a course of study. The "Visotoner" is now undergoing field testing, and the Hadley School for the Blind offers a home study course in the use of the "Visotoner" code. Experience so far indicates that the "Visotoner" can be useful for reading printed material of limited length, such as correspondence.

In other research sponsored by the Veterans Administration, Haskins Laboratories of New York is investigating another type of reading machine, this one designed to transform printed text into spoken English. Words or sounds are stored on magnetic tape and then compiled into speech as the machine moves over the printed page.

For persons with some vision the Raud Corporation, Santa Monica, California has reported on a system using closed circuit TV. The user manipulates a TV camera across printed or written material. The print is magnified and projected onto a TV monitor directly in

front of the user's eyes. The various components of the system can be easily adjusted to suit individual needs.

While work continues on perfecting reading machines, other exciting developments in research on sensory aids for the blind point to the possibility of blind persons being able to "see." At San Francisco's Pacific Medical Center scientists are working on an electronic system that will permit blind persons to "see" objects with their skin. A TV camera picks up the image of an object and converts it into a pattern of dots, then hundreds of tiny cones vibrate against the person's back, allowing him to feel the dot pattern and thus perceive the image of the object. A lightweight, portable model of this system is being developed.

Advancements in miniaturization of electronic equipment may lead to a TV camera small enough to fit into the eye socket and function as an artificial eye. Signals from the camera would be transmitted to tiny wires implanted in the brain. This research is being carried out at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, New York.

A similar approach is being followed by Dr. Giles M. Brindley, a neurophysiologist at the University of London's Institute of Psychiatry. Dr. Brindley reports success in creating rudimentary artificial sight in a blind woman by surgically implanting an array of tiny electrical stimulators in her brain.

While many interesting research projects are being conducted, it should be emphasized that none of the devices described is presently available and it is likely to be years before practical applications are possible.

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## ANYONE FOR CHECKERS?

[Reprinted from the Newark (New Jersey) *Evening News*.]

A blind student at New Jersey's Upsala College has begun programming a new computer so it can play a "formidable" game of checkers against him.

By the time he is graduated, Robert Beekman, twenty-three, hopes to have the computer so oriented that it can tell when its opponent is cheating.

"Right now, I win most of the games," Beekman said, "but by the time I get my diploma I expect the machine will be fed enough information to give me formidable competition and to keep me honest."

The IBM computer facility on the East Orange campus is used for courses in computing, mathematics, science, business, and economics. It is also planned to work up programs for Upsala's admissions and treasurer's departments.

Beekman took a programming course at Upsala last summer and finds that he now is able to apply his learning to the new equipment.

In the early stages of programming, the computer cannot make double jumps, a deficiency which Beekman will remedy as he progresses in the weeks ahead. Eventually, the computer will provide for triple and quadruple jumps, as well as many other intricacies of the game.

Beekman, who plans to become a laboratory scientist after he attends

graduate school, uses a checker board when he plays the computer. The board is covered with round and square checkers and each playable space is numbered. When he makes a move, he types the number on the keyboard of the central processing unit and the computer replies with a counter move by the numbers. The adjustment is then made on the checker board.

Professor Donald Lintvedt, computer center coordinator for the college, reads Beekman the computer's answer and the game progresses in that manner.

Here is some of the dialogue that the machine utters prior to and during the game.

"So you want to play checkers, do you? Just be honest and no double jumps, please, because I am not programmed to handle them. Number your spaces from your side of the board, and I will number mine from my side. All set?"

The computer then sets up a numerical diagram of the way the men are placed on the board at the start of the game. "Now flip a coin," the computer continues. "If I go first, set Data Switch 1 up."

Professor Lintvedt flips a coin, Beekman loses and the computer has the first move.

When a checker is jumped, the computer reports how many men are left

on the board for itself or for its adversary.

Periodically throughout the contest, the computer sets up a printout showing the way the checkers should be positioned on the board at that point of the game.

If Beekman wins, the computer writes in good sportsmanship:

"Congratulations, you just won the game."

But if the computer wins, it sort of rubs it in to its opponent. "How about that?" the words come out. "I have just won the game."

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## MINIMUM FEASIBLE PARTICIPATION

by  
Rami Rabby

[The following letter was sent to the Executive Director of the Governor's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped by Rami Rabby, President of the Illinois Congress of the Blind.]

Dear Mr. Conn,

As you know, the Illinois Congress of the Blind is an organisation of blind persons dedicated to the achievement, through legislation, litigation, public education and self-education, of greater opportunity, equality and security for the blind of Illinois, in all areas of human endeavour.

As the Illinois Congress of the Blind has progressed and prospered in its activities of the past two years, we have taken very careful note of an unfortunate and harmful tendency which can generally be discerned in the work of agencies for the handicapped, throughout the world, but particularly here in Illinois where we, the blind, and the otherwise physically handicapped, have suffered its deleterious consequences most deeply. The phenomenon I speak of is the persistent exclusion of the handicapped from the

governing boards and bodies which claim to administer the affairs and guide the destinies of the handicapped.

I would be deluding you if I were to praise the Governor's Committee on the Employment of the Handicapped for the manner in which it has assumed its responsibilities and discharged its obligations to the handicapped population of our state. No doubt, the activities of the Governor's Committee have, to a degree, been constrained and restricted by insufficient financial support on the part of the state administration. However, it is my belief that the Committee's activities and success are impaired to a far greater degree by a bankrupt philosophy and a deficient attitude toward handicaps which are institutionalised in the very structure and organisation of the body.

Your professed aim is the promotion of the employment of handicapped

persons. That is, indeed, a laudable goal for which to strive. However, let us examine more closely the resources the Governor's Committee has at its disposal for carrying out its promotional activities.

By your own admission, not a single member of the Governor's Committee himself suffers from a disability. Now, you might expect us immediately to raise canes and wave crutches in protest against this horrendous violation of the law of maximum participation and representation of any group in the determination of its own destiny. Far from it, for such a demand would be profoundly unreasonable and quite unrealistic, since where in the state of Illinois are we to find those blind business magnates and crippled corporate executives who would join the Committee and demonstrate to their fellow-tycoons that the blind and the otherwise physically handicapped *are* normal, that they *are* ambitious and that they *are* potentially productive, if only they are given the opportunity to realise that potential. The answer is that we would find them nowhere, and the reason for that answer is that the very members of the Governor's Committee on the Employment of the Handicapped (and I speak of them as representing the class of work-givers in our society) have for decades withheld from the handicapped even the factory time clock, let alone the key to the executive suite. Is it really possible for men whose eyes are blinded and minds crippled by an image of the physically handicapped as necessarily helpless, as automatically dependent and thereby ineligible for a position on the corporate hierarchy, is it really possible for such men to persuade other such men that, in fact, eyesight is not to be equated with ability, that loss of eyesight does not

mean loss of insight and foresight, and that investment in the assets of a handicapped person is profitable and reaps a rich return, something they would gladly welcome, these days. I do not believe it is possible, and I hereby make two recommendations which, if adopted, would interrupt the dialogue between one non-believer and another, and break the cycle of unemployment, non-participation and depression whose victims, ironically, are the believers themselves.

First, Governor Ogilvie is requested to establish an advisory committee to the Governor's Committee on the Employment of the Handicapped composed entirely of handicapped persons employed successfully in numerous occupational categories and organisational levels, in the private and public sectors, and whose philosophy and thinking are in accord with those of the National Federation of the Blind, as expounded above. Such an advisory body would be charged with informing and instructing the Governor's Committee on matters affecting the handicapped, and, what is most important, would be charged with meeting employers, individually or in groups, and demonstrating to them the true capabilities and limitations of the physically handicapped.

Second, the Governor's Committee on the Employment of the Handicapped should proceed at once to arrange a joint conference with the Midwest Industrial Relations Association devoted wholly to the employment of the handicapped and attended by the Governor himself. The majority of the participants at this conference would be successfully employed handicapped persons.

The members of the Governor's Committee on the Employment of the Handicapped have in their hands the power to raise the quality of life of the handicapped population of Illinois, if they truly so desire. Misconceptions and misunderstandings concerning handicaps and handicapped persons are indeed difficult to dispel. The handicapped of

Illinois are ready, willing, and able to help you dispel them. Will you accept our challenge?

Sincerely,

Rami Rabby, President  
Illinois Congress of the Blind

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THE IOWA CONVENTION  
by  
Creig Slayton

Whatever your criteria the 1970 Iowa Association of the Blind Convention which was held on May 30 and 31 at the Hotel Fort Des Moines was the greatest ever. Size, enthusiasm, and program coupled to make this convention one that will not be soon forgotten by Federationists in Iowa.

With over two hundred and fifty registered for general sessions this convention was certainly the largest one ever held. From all parts of Iowa and from other states IAB members came for the 1970 Convention. Among long-time members from beyond Iowa's borders were Mr. and Mrs. John Roppe, Frederic, Wisconsin; Mr. and Mrs. Don Palmer, Sioux Falls, South Dakota; and Mr. and Mrs. Charles Casperson of Denison, Texas. The oldest IAB member in attendance was John Gifford, age seventy-nine, of 619 4th Avenue, West, Spencer, Iowa. The two hundred and seventy-five attending the annual banquet surpassed by more than a hundred the previous record. The rapid growth of the association is signified by a

current paid membership of over five hundred and fifty.

The enthusiasm and comradeship so evident throughout gave a depth never before witnessed at an IAB convention. After a standing room only attendance at the opening session it was necessary to enlarge the seating capacity of the meeting room by fifty percent. The Hospitality Room hosted by the Des Moines Association of the Blind did much to encourage the spirit.

The program from the presentation of the key to the city to Rienzi Alagiyawanna, of Ceylon, President of the International Federation of the Blind, to the fall of the final gavel was truly superb. Mr. Alagiyawanna spoke to the convention regarding the IFB and Mr. E. V. Joseph spoke of the plight of the blind in his own country of India. Kenneth Hopkins, Director of the Idaho Commission for the Blind and native Iowan, discussed the Federation in Idaho and the tremendous strides the Commission has made in two

short years.

Dorothy Petrucci, Acting Principal of the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School, discussed blind students in public schools and a proposed curriculum for the coming school year at IBSSS. John McCarthy, from the Department of Social Services, discussed Aid to the Blind and Medic-Aid programs. Dr. Kenneth Jernigan, Director of the Iowa Commission for the Blind, reported Commission activities including the astounding growth in library services and the fact that over a hundred blind Iowans went back into gainful employment during the past year. The IBSSS Alumni Association held a luncheon meeting on Saturday, May 30, presided over by the association president, Curtis Willoughby. The Orientation Alumni Association had a breakfast get-together on Sunday morning, May 31.

As usual the highlight of the convention was the annual banquet on Saturday evening. Presentations at the banquet included a charter of affiliation to the Northwest Iowa Association of the Blind, and three annual awards. The Palmer Memorial Award given to an outstanding graduating senior from the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School was given to Miss Connie David. The H. F. Schluntz College Student Award was

presented to Gary Patterson, a graduating senior from Iowa State University. The Altig Award given to the person who has contributed most to assisting blind persons to help themselves was given to Warren Coleman, Treasurer of the Iowa Lions Sight Conservation Foundation and long time friend of the blind. Other distinguished guests included Secretary of State Melvin Synhorst, Treasurer of State Maurice Baringer, State Auditor Lloyd Smith and several legislators. Dr. Kenneth Jernigan, Director of the Iowa Commission for the Blind and President of the National Federation of the Blind, delivered the banquet address. Dr. Jernigan spoke of the misconceptions of several prominent educators of blind children, and illustrated these erroneous ideas about blindness by directly quoting these individuals.

IAB officers are: President, Sylvester Nemmers; First Vice-President, Curtis Willoughby; Second Vice-President, Don Morris; Secretary, Jo Slayton, and Treasurer, Bud Stutters. Newly elected Board Members are: Floyd Moore, Shirley Lansing, Jack Prim, and Neil Butler. The following people were chosen as NFB Delegates and alternates: Sylvester Nemmers, Floyd Moore, Jim Tanner, Bud Stutters, Pamela Buckler, Margaret Warren, and Phil Parks.

#### RESOLUTION ADOPTED UNANIMOUSLY

Mr. Maurice Baringer, State Treasurer and Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, which is concerned with the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School, and who was appointed by Governor Ray in January, addressed the convention on Saturday afternoon, and the IAB members were

delighted that he attended several sessions on Sunday. After Mr. Baringer spoke, the following IAB Policy Resolution, presented by Ray Halverson for the Resolutions Committee, was adopted unanimously by the IAB members.

*WHEREAS*, the Iowa Association of the Blind has always been concerned with the education of blind children and has studied and evaluated the report of the University of Northern Iowa and the Outside Professional Critique, and in 1966 conducted an extensive survey of the educational facilities, programs and curricula of the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School; and

*WHEREAS*, the Honorable Robert D. Ray, Governor of Iowa, in his statement of January 30, 1970, created a special Ad Hoc Working Committee whose declared purpose is "to devise, develop and carry out specific arrangements for cooperative activity in all areas of mutual responsibility by both the Blind Commission and the School"; and

*WHEREAS*, close harmonious coordination of the two programs is highly desirable to the blind of the state

*NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED* by the Iowa Association of the Blind in

convention assembled this 30th day of May, 1970, in the city of Des Moines, Iowa, that this organization congratulates the Governor for his wise and judicious effort in establishing this special policy committee and pledges itself to enthusiastically cooperate in order to make possible the needed improvements in the education of blind children; and

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED* that this organization will support the Special Ad Hoc Working Committee and will refrain from conducting any activities which will in any way impede the committee's work; and

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED* that the Iowa Association of the Blind's support of the committee will continue unless it should become clear that the committee is unable to accomplish its stated purposes. In such event, the Association shall seek other means of attaining equal opportunities in the education of blind children.

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#### A COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND

by  
John F. Nagle

Today, the word, the attitude, and the implementation is the "team approach", the "coordinated attack". In all fields--urban planning, medicine, social welfare--separate specialists are joined together into a combined effort that examines and deals with all aspects of a problem, that studies and treats all aspects of the "whole" person. The single expert

working on a multi-faceted problem has become as antiquated, today, as the one-room school-house.

And we of the National Federation of the Blind are abreast of our times and are in the forefront of the unified approach trend of our times. We, blind people, have long understood that the

problems of a blind man who must live in a sighted world, who must work and compete in a sight-g geared economy, cannot be satisfactorily solved by administrative agency fragmentation. So we have advocated, through our state organizations, sponsorship of the single agency administrative structure to house all programs of services to the blind in a state. And many of our state affiliates have supported legislation that would create in each state a Commission for the Blind, a single agency administrative structure we believe best suited to assure adequate and quality services to blind persons.

The man who is blind and has a need for publicly-provided financial assistance, this man has the same basic needs as his sighted fellows, yet these must be met with a thorough understanding of the limiting circumstances of blindness. This blind man also has needs that are uniquely his by reason of his blindness, and their recognition, too, requires a full comprehension of the nature and consequences of blindness.

Allowance for food must be determined with an awareness that groceries may have to be ordered by phone from a store that delivers, and charges higher prices for this service. Or if this blind man is to get his meals in restaurants, that he must patronize those nearby and accessible to him with his undeveloped travel skill--he can't scour the city to find and eat his meals in places that might be cheaper. An allowance to hire a guide or to pay the expenses of a guide, a telephone as a necessary contact with the outside world, more than the usual allowance for cleaning and laundering--these and similar special needs incidental

to blindness must be acknowledged and provided for in the aid grant of a financially needy blind man. And these special needs, these special requirements of the blind person will only be acknowledged and met adequately when those administering publicly-provided programs of assistance to the needy blind have a complete understanding of the problems of a blind person living in a sighted society.

Personnel administering a program of aid to the blind may be knowledgeable of the problems of blindness, they may be aware of the special needs of a blind person, but usually, this knowledge is restricted to their particular field--usually they are abysmally ignorant of other fields, of other needs of the blind person, of other programs of services to meet the other-than-financial needs of the blind person.

The blind man who applies for public assistance may be very helpless in his blindness, but needlessly helpless. He may be very dependent, but needlessly dependent. He may require orientation into a sensible philosophy of functioning without sight, he may have need for mobility training and training in the other skills of blindness. The blind aid applicant may have an excellent potential for constructive and gainful employment, needing only a restored belief in himself, needing to obtain only proper education and training for him to get off welfare and support himself.

Of-course, the social caseworker with a blind client can refer his client to the agency providing vocational rehabilitation to the blind--but often does not do so, because his expertness is in public

assistance, his evaluation of his blind client may be made from little or no knowledge of what a blind person can achieve with adequate help and training, with little or no knowledge of other programs of services to the blind available from other agencies in his state. Far too often, newly blind persons, parents of blind children, learn of the programs of special aids to off-set the limitations imposed by blindness through fortunate accident. Far too often, blind persons, parents of blind children, never learn of these programs at all or learn of them too late to be of value.

Several years ago, the Federal Public Assistance Office conducted a survey of the blind caseload. It was discovered that only eight per cent of blind aid recipients had talking books, and only eleven per cent even knew about them-- yet every blind person receiving public aid must be contacted at least once and, more often, periodically, by social caseworkers who are supposed to be informed and to inform their blind clients of all special helps and services available to the blind.

The needs of the whole blind person are not met adequately when programs of services to the blind are administered as a part of a large agency. Recently, the Director of the Department of Public Welfare in the State of Maryland opposed a Federation-sponsored bill raising the level of blind aid payments. "If you approve this bill," the Director told a committee of the legislature, "you must also raise the level of payments of all public assistance recipients in the state!" The measure would have been adopted if only the three hundred and eighty-five blind aid recipients had been considered, but when all recipients became involved, and there are many thousands of them,

the proposal was too costly and was rejected.

In Michigan, the head of the Division of Services to the Blind admitted he had tried to abolish the means test in vocational rehabilitation services. But his Division was a part of the General Rehabilitation agency--to eliminate the means test for all handicapped clients would be too costly--and it could not be done, with the existing organizational structure, only for the blind and the others denied, so it could not and was not done for the blind.

Even when the administrative employees of a Division of Services to the Blind in a huge general agency are well-grounded in the problems of blindness, still, they are ham-strung in their efforts to give quality and adequate services to their clients by rules and regulations, by policies and practices of the over-all agency with which they must conform, they are frustrated by administrative bureaucracy which prevents them from doing what they know needs to be done.

When services are provided to the blind by a Division of a large agency, the division's budget is buried away in the budget of the entire agency, it is but a small and insignificant part of the total budget and cannot be identified and spotlighted by those who would argue to the legislature for more blind service funds. The Administrator of a Division of Blind Services within a large agency structure must request funds, not according to the known needs of his division, but according to the budget policies of the general agency.

When services to the blind are administered by a Division within a massive agency, the administrative personnel of the Blind Division have a thousand excuses available to them for poor quality or inadequate services, for they are safely hidden away behind an impenetrable wall of red tape, they are protected from assuming the responsibility for their failures by the layer upon layer of administrative control, by the labyrinthian channels of administration that lead only to other labyrinthian channels of administration.

When services to the blind are fragmented among various state agencies, the blind person needing several kinds of help--and usually not aware of the kinds of help he needs or the kinds of help that are available to him--such a person goes from agency to agency, a confused and unhelped victim of fragmented bureaucracy.

Inter-agency rivalries, ignorance in one agency of services provided by other agencies, weeks or months long time lag of referrals from one agency to another caused by stacked-up paperwork, by indifference, or even caused by deliberate refusal of one agency to cooperate with another agency--all these and more are encountered by the hapless and helpless blind man who applies for services held in a fragmentation state.

For many years, publicly-financed services have been provided to blind Americans. History shows that over the years legislatures have acted with a generous concern for the welfare of blind people, but far too often, legislative concern and generosity have been blocked by barriers of administrative structure, by

obstructions built-in to the administrative agency structure. The result has been substantial expenditures of effort and money with far too few accomplishments in the lives of far too few blind people.

For us, this is the test: Are blind people really helped, or do agencies just say they're helped while blind people say and know differently? Are the services that are provided to the blind of a kind and quality and quantity that fully meet the needs of the blind, with the blind, themselves, acknowledging this--or are there great discrepancies between the kind and quality of the blind clients of these agencies?

We of the National Federation of the Blind believe, and this belief is based upon the experiences of many thousands of us, blind people from every segment of American life and from every area of the Nation, that all publicly-provided services to the blind programs in a state must be housed in a single administrative agency if all of the needs of the blind of the state are to be fully recognized, met, and satisfied.

Again, from our experience as blind people, we have come to know that a Commission for the Blind is the most satisfactory governmental structure for such an agency, with Commissioners appointed by the Governor, and always containing among their number blind persons in constant contact with the rank and file blind of the state through their active membership in a state-wide organization of the blind.

A year ago, at the Liberty Chapter Symposium here in Philadelphia, the acting head of the Pennsylvania State

Agency for the Blind said there was a blind person already on his Advisory Committee, in response to a request for him to name an Advisory Committee of blind people. The more than one hundred blind Pennsylvanians in the room were surprised and asked the man's name. The name was given, and no blind person in the audience had ever heard of the person who, supposedly, was representing them and their interests on the State Advisory Committee.

A Commission for the Blind which contains *all* state provided services to the blind of a state is best qualified to implement the "team approach", to mount the "coordinated attack" to achieve the greatest possible satisfaction of all the needs of all of the blind of the state. A Commission for the Blind is best able to deal confidently and successfully with all of the problems and perplexities of the whole blind man. In a Commission for the Blind, the entire philosophy, purpose, scope, and effort of the agency is directed toward understanding and fulfilling the needs of blind persons. In such an agency, separate kinds of needed services can be merged into an individualized program for each blind client by within-the-agency coordination and agency-required personnel cooperation. In a Commission for the Blind state, the blind person must go only to one place for specialized help in unraveling all of his tangled difficulties caused by his blindness.

The Director of a Commission for the Blind goes to the legislature with his own separate and distinct agency budget, with every dollar requested for the sole and identifiable purpose of providing helps only to blind people. Under such

circumstances, if the Commission Director does not ask for enough money, the blind of the state can appeal, themselves, to the legislature, making known their needs that will only be met adequately with a higher level of funding.

If a Commission for the Blind Director expects trouble getting sufficient money from the legislature, if he is experiencing interference or curtailment of Commission powers or programs from meddlesome or expansion-seeking bureaucrats, if the Commission is attacked or threatened with discontinuance or fragmentation, if the Commission Director is attacked or threatened with loss of job by officials of public or private agencies--and any of these actions are to the disadvantage of the blind people being served and are not merited in the judgment of the blind people being served, then the organized blind will gladly help and cooperate and defend and protect, just as they will always work with the Commission Director in any and every way possible in his efforts to provide adequate and quality services to the blind of the state where the Commission is situated.

If a Commission for the Blind is to be fully effective in the lives of blind people, the Commissioners must be given complete authority and full responsibility for the operation of the agency. The Commissioners should possess absolute power to hire and fire the Commission Director, to hire and fire all other personnel of the agency, free from any state civil service requirements.

With this structural autonomy, if the blind people of a state believe they are getting shortshrift from the Commission

for the Blind, they can go to the Commission Director about any Commission employee, and the Director can get rid of the employee if facts justify such action. If the blind people believe that the Commission Director is not performing as they think he should, they can demand of the Commissioners or of the Governor that a new Director be hired. The greatest advantage of a Commission for the Blind with the authority I have described, is its un-hideable accountability to the blind people it serves. Such an agency would be stripped of the usual red-tape alibis.

Agency administrative superiors could not be blamed for failures for there would be no "administrative superiors" above the Commissioners.

Public and private agency people frequently say that they in the agencies and we in the Federation are both working for the same thing. Unfortunately, far too often the experience of blind people is conclusive evidence that this just is not so!

We in the Federation are only concerned with what is best and most suitable and most necessary for the blind person, while, generally, agency people are concerned primarily with their agencies and only incidentally with the well-being of their blind clients. We, blind people, believe a Commission for the Blind is the best possible governmental mechanism for providing blind people with the help they must have to function, blind, surrounded by sighted men and living in a sight-based environment.

We ask and urge and plead, therefore, that agency administrators in blind service fragmentation states join with the organized blind in support of Commission for the Blind legislation. We ask and urge and plead that those who administer separate and general-agency isolated programs of services to the blind work with the Federation to secure the enactment of Commission for the Blind legislation because it would be best for blind people.

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#### MEET OUR STATE PRESIDENT, JOSEPH SPENCE, AND OUR STATE AFFILIATE--DELAWARE

I was born November 6, 1928, and have lived in and around Wilmington, Delaware, ever since. I attended public school even though I had difficulty in reading what was written on the blackboard and in high school I encountered even more problems with reading textbooks. Even though I was examined by many eye specialists over the years for the optic atrophy, no one

recommended that my parents register me with the Delaware Commission for the Blind.

Upon graduation from Wilmington High School in 1946, I found employment with the Continental Can Company in Wilmington, manufacturing bottle caps. After working for ten years during which time I worked in every department in the

plant without a mark against my record, a new plant manager arrived on the scene and went through the medical files of the personnel department. A number of handicapped persons were discharged at that time with the story that there was no job in the plant we could perform.

At this time I became acquainted with the Delaware Commission for the Blind and began training as a vending stand operator under which program I am still employed. I had a location in a Sears store for ten years and am now located in the control division of the local electric utility company.

In 1949 I married Joanna Buchanan, originally from Virginia, then Maryland, who was attending college in Wilmington at that time. We now have four children: Frank, age 20, who is now married and attending the University of Delaware; Joseph, age 18, who is an assistant in a dental supply firm; Sandra, age 15; and Theresa, age 6. In addition to raising the children and running the house and working full time, Joanna has helped me over the years with all my activities and work with the blind. Joanna is now the training supervisor for the medical secretarial pools of the Wilmington Medical Center, (a merger of four major hospitals within the city).

During my ten years in the industrial plant, I spent six years as a shop steward in the plant union, and I could see the need for an organization to help the blind with some of the problems they must face every day. I became quite active in the blind bowling in my area and soon helped to organize a group under the name of the Blind Recreation Association. This group dealt with recreation primarily, and we

raised funds to promote our programs by sponsoring a benefit show each year.

I became aware of the National Federation of the Blind through talking with people whom I met on the national blind bowling tournaments. Then in 1968 I attended the convention of the Free State Federation of the Blind in Baltimore, Maryland. At that time John Nagle, Don Capps, Ned Graham, and Mae Davidow, all members of the National Federation of the Blind executive board, helped me lay the foundation for the Delaware Federation of the Blind.

On December 13, 1968, National Federation of the Blind President, Dr. Kenneth Jernigan, conducted a meeting in Wilmington and thirty-three charter members were signed up at that time. I was elected President; Edward Stokes, a sub-assembly man at our General Motors plant was elected First Vice-President; Ray Munis, a retired du Pont Company employee, Second Vice-President Ann Robinson, a partially sighted school teacher was elected Secretary. Ann has since moved out of the area and has been replaced by Cathy Colmery, sighted, who has worked with the blind for several years as a sighted scorekeeper in the bowling league. Don McDonnell, employed in a local supermarket, as a stock man, was elected Treasurer. Board members elected were Mrs. Marie Munis, retired home teacher; Donald Smith, independent insurance broker; Otis Herring, social worker with the Youth Services Commission as well as pastor of a church; and Joanna Spence.

In our year and a half of existence we have grown to a membership of ninety-five. Our fundraising projects



Joseph Spence, president of the Delaware Federation of the Blind.



included a sale of Braille guide dog ash trays, and we are currently mailing an appeal letter for White Cane Week. We presented our case in support of the Delaware Commission for the Blind when the Delaware state government was changed to a cabinet type government recently. We have written and given our support to a number of bills concerning the blind in Delaware.

We are still a young organization and as yet we have no real contact with our

state legislature. This year we aim to start acquainting ourselves in this respect and will push for the passage of the Model White Cane Law.

Although we are a small inexperienced group, we will be lending our weight to that of other blind people across the country in order that we may accomplish much towards the improvement of the general welfare of the blind across our great land.

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## MALAWI TELLS ITS STORY

by

Dr. Isabelle L. D. Grant

My extensive, if not voluminous, overseas mail brings me frequently letters addressed through me, to members of the NFB. During my visit to Malawi, which is the new name for Nyasaland, a country in Central Africa bordering on Mozambique to the west of the continent, a country with a large blind population, I visited an agricultural centre for the blind, and met some thirty young blind men learning how to grow food for their nation. One of the teachers, a blind man, with almost flawless English learned when he was a sighted student, impressed me very much. I have kept up uninterrupted correspondence with him. Here is one of his recent letters, directed to you as to me. I would be glad to give anyone further particulars regarding this young man. Please write to the Editor or to me.

Training Center for the Blind  
P. O. Box 76 Mlanje  
Malawi, Africa

Dear Dr. L. D. Grant,

On behalf of my blind friends, trainees and all blind who will be trained at this center, I thankfully write this letter to all blind friends of the National Federation of the Blind of the U. S. through you, who have taken great trouble and sympathetic consideration of making these wonderful gifts available to us. These gifts reached us safely.

I feel very sorry that I was unable to write in time, this was due to much work at the center. However, I gratefully write to you personally Dr. Grant, for the wonderful and difficult task you have

performed in making all these magnificent gifts available to us.

In the first place, let me tell you that the typewriter, the braille plastics papers and the five interesting conventional records reached us safely.

It is always very hard to get suitable language in which to express thanks to understanding friends like you personally, and the whole U. S. National Federation of the Blind. However, please tell all our friends that we here, take great interest in all what they do there in trying to uplift the blind of nearly the whole world.

The first work that we have done with the paper that we received from you friends, was to write to various blind people of this country who can at last read braille, to inform them of this great gift and ask them to unite and show the general public, that despite the fact that we lost our sight we too, can play a very important role of developing the nation if at all such recognitions can be made by the public and the government of this country. We wrote all our friends throughout the country to think seriously on the matter and thus, try to unite and form a simple organization of the blind only. Few of our friends have given very impressive comments on the matter, while many more still think that such an organization is impossible at present to be formed in the country.

We have however, a very good hope that again, who promised through His prophet Isaiah not to leave the blind alone, will surely give us the way and guide us to the unexpected triumph goal.

Already three blind trainees have

started on the new typewriter. They are anxiously and seriously studying their lesson and one already, can type a few vernacular and English words. The other two are also trying very hard.

The typewriter is not run by the government. It is solely in our hands, because it is our great gift from our own blind friends for the benefit of the blind. It is therefore, put in our general lecturing room so that every blind instructor, trainee, and every blind person can get the chance of learning to type. As I have already stated above, it is just very hard to express fully all thanks to what you, our friends have done for us. This is really a big lesson for many blind friends of this country, that if they can consider themselves to be useful citizens they can easily participate in the nation-wide enjoyments. At present, there are so many blocks on the way to the blind's freedom, there is still a wrong idea about the blind among the sighted people of this country. As a result, education for the blind is quite uncertain, we have no proper representative in the national assembly who can speed up and recommend the advancement of blind's education. As you know, we have blind who are graduated, even simple employments are just hard to be obtained by a blind man or woman.

At present, there are only sixteen blind men employed in the whole country including myself. Of these, seven are telephone switchboard operators, two assistant instructors unconfirmed, seven of us are teachers. Of the seven teachers one is legally blind teaching in a sighted school, one totally blind teaching in a sighted school, (probably) three totally blind and one partial sighted teaching in two schools for the blind in the country.

Unfortunately, all of us who are employed are not quite free. We have many suppressors. There is no consideration of any kind to enable us to go to any refresher or extension courses. Instead, those chances go to sighted folk which is a very big disappointment to us all.

Dr. Grant, I personally thank you for your great effort of making *The Braille Monitor* available to us, this magazine does much for us. I in particular, learn much from it. I also thank the editor for his tireless effort of mailing the periodicals to us and above that, I thank him for sending to us a National Federation constitutional guide which is of great importance to our first step. We have now a more brighter knowledge of how our blind brothers and sisters wage war for their rights in all parts of the world. I am struggling for the formation of our national organization of the blind. I have so many blocks and disappointments on the way. However, I know that God will not act unmercifully with blind people of Malawi.

We feel very proud and thankful for the real freedom of our friends in the U. S. and pray for prosperity of the whole U. S. National Federation of the Blind.

The principal of this center is really a man of understanding. He sacrifices

himself for the real benefits of the blind. Unfortunately, most of his plans for the blind's advantages do not carry weight because he is the only one in the whole country who strikes on the right point on the welfare of the blind and you know very well that the world hates the truth. The real reason on this point is that our government is very busy on other development schemes. However, we have still a bright hope.

May I have this opportunity of thanking you, Dr. Grant, for the five records we received. The records are both profitable and enjoyable to us, only that we feel sorry we've been unable to hear them due to lack of a record player. However, I consulted a friend of mine who is in possession of a radiogram and we only play one record. I tell you, it was really enjoyable. We are looking forward to purchasing a record player, although it will take time before we have one; yet, we believe it will be found. We really thank all our friends of the Federation who take trouble of thinking of us here in Malawi.

Lastly but not least, I would like to reply to your question of my going for an extension course at college. Unfortunately, I'm not selected. As I have mentioned above, we blind people of this country will have to do more to have our own affairs perfect.

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## THERE ARE NONE SO SIGHTLESS

Dear Mr. Jernigan:

This is a one woman try at making obsolete *one* word in our vocabulary that is unpleasant to the ears of many unfortunate people.

"Blind" is an ugly word. It is blunt, something like a brand. Why should people who are sightless have to have a special label? Can't we just say sightless, meaning an ordinary person who happens to lack one of his senses?

It seems so much more acceptable and natural. Just the changing of a word sometimes helps. Don't you prefer mental retardation to an old term once used--feeble minded? Will you help in a similar way to make "blind" obsolete and "sightlessness" a popular term?

This letter is going to many people in influential positions. Your substituting sightlessness for blindness will help. People emulate you. Couldn't some of you work with governmental agencies? Couldn't you speak out for or initiate legislation that would have the title "Library for the Blind" changed to "Library for Sightless Citizens?"

If you are interested and want to help, I would appreciate a letter telling me what you think you might do to at least make what they hear through the sense of sound more pleasant to the sightless.

This is not for point of view columns, please, unless anonymously.

Sincerely and thank you,  
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Dear . . . . .:

I have your letter advocating the discontinuance of the use of the word "blind" and substituting in its place the word "sightless." You say that the word "blind" is unpleasant to the ears and that its elimination would bring betterment to the sightless.

I disagree most profoundly with what you say. For many years those Americans with black skins tried to look like white people, and got only misery for their pains. Some of them tried to get preparations to straighten their hair, and others bought products to lighten their skins. They missed the point entirely. They should not have been working to try to look like white people but to convince others (and especially themselves) that it was respectable to be black. In fact, I am a little disturbed by the individual who insists upon avoiding the word "negro" preferring instead the word "black." The important thing is to establish the concept of the respectability of being what you are, regardless of the word which may be used to designate it.

For instance, when someone says to a blind person, "You do things so well that I forget you are blind and simply think of you as being like anybody else," is that really a compliment? Suppose one of us went to France and someone said:

"You do things so well that I forget you are an American and simply think of you as being like anyone else." Would it be a compliment? Of course, the blind person must not wear a chip on his shoulder or allow himself to become angry

or emotionally upset. He should be courteous, and he should accept the statement as the compliment it is meant to be. But he should understand that it is really not complimentary. In reality it says:

"It is normal for blind people to be inferior and limited, different and much less able than the rest of us. Of course, you are still a blind person and still much more limited than I, but you have compensated for it so well that I almost forget that you are inferior to me."

I have known blind people who are ashamed to carry a cane and who bluffed sight that they did not have because they thought it make them look more like other people. I have known blind people who felt that it was desirable to associate with or marry sighted people simply because they were sighted--as a status symbol. All of this is not to argue for segregation or that the blind should not associate with the sighted. It is not to argue that sight is not valuable, and it is certainly not to argue for the obnoxious, immature militance which tried to cover feelings of inferiority by exaggerating and emphasizing the differences. "Blind" is not necessarily beautiful.

What I am saying is simply this: Even if it were desirable (which I think it is not) it is not possible to get people to stop thinking of us as blind. Rather, we must work to get people to see that it is respectable to be blind, that the real problem of blindness is not the loss of eyesight but the misconceptions and the misunderstandings which exist. With proper training and opportunity the average blind person can do the average job in the average place of business and do it as well as his sighted neighbor. He can participate fully in social and civic affairs. He is not necessarily less fortunate than others in the community.

The problem, in short, is not the word but the concept. No change of terminology can improve our condition or make us hold our heads higher, put money into our pockets or self-respect into our souls. Only a change of attitude can do that. Therefore, let the public continue to see us as "blind," for that is what we are; but let them also see us as equals, fully capable of competing and participating, for we are that, too.

Very truly yours,

Kenneth Jernigan, President  
National Federation of the Blind

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MONTANA CONVENTION  
by  
Susan Ford

The twenty-fifth annual convention of the Montana Association for the Blind was held on the Montana State University

campus in Bozeman during the weekend of July 17, 18, and 19. The members who attended were active members in the

truest sense of the word.

The first session of the convention was called to order on Friday evening at 8 p.m. President John Ford gave his yearly report on the progress of the MAB during this session. We also heard Mrs. Jessie Marsh of Bozeman speak about what the Association was in the beginning and her thoughts as to where it should go from here.

During the Saturday sessions we heard a progress report from the director of the Summer Orientation Program for the Blind, Bill Gannon; a discussion of the opportunities for employment of the blind by Emil Honka, director of the Division of Visual Services, followed by a panel discussion with blind persons discussing their jobs; a discussion of the 1970 NFB Convention; as well as reports from various committees. Two resolutions were passed at this year's convention. One concerned itself with an award to be given in memory of one of our late members; the other began the procedure which must take place in order to make it possible for blind persons to receive an official license--similar to a driver's license--but to serve only for identification purposes.

Dr. Kenneth Jernigan, President of the National Federation of the Blind, was our guest and speaker during the convention. He spoke to us during the convention session about the activities of

the Federation during the past year. At the banquet on Saturday evening, he entitled his remarks "Why I am a Federationist." Not only was he an inspiration to active members in the MAB but also to guests and friends of the MAB. Since it had been thirteen years since Mr. Jernigan had attended an MAB convention, he was more than welcome.

Because this year was our silver anniversary, we had a large birthday cake with our organization emblem on it on Friday evening. At the banquet charter members were recognized and the very beginnings of the organization were discussed by Keith Denton, one of the charter members.

This year three officers were up for election: the Second Vice-President is now Tony Persha of Red Lodge; the Southern District representative is Charles Vanderzee of Bozeman; and the representative from the Northern District is Luella McVeda of Lewistown.

During the past year the MAB has added a new chapter, the Capital City Chapter of Helena, to which a charter was presented during the banquet. We taped the entire convention this year, and an edited version of those tapes will be made available on request at the cost of the tapes involved. You can see, therefore, that we continue to grow as we pass our twenty-fifth year of existence.

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## BOATBUILDER ADDS SPINE TINGLES TO JOB

by  
Martha Hannon

[Reprinted from the *Oregon Journal*, Portland, Oregon.]

John D. Omundson, native Portlander, could be the only blind boatbuilder in the United States, maybe in the world. When diabetes completely blinded him five years ago, John's inherent tenacity turned that setback into "the golden opportunity" to do what he had dreamed of doing since 1950—quit working for other shipbuilding firms and start his own. A decision was bolstered by stories John had heard about another blind boatbuilder, long dead, who had refused to give up his trade.

John says: "I could not see giving up what I knew best and enjoyed most for less demanding work. And after learning to live in darkness, it was not that difficult, because much of hand-building boats is by feel and instinct anyway. Welfare was out. That's for the needy. But I still had a family to support; I was only thirty-three years old, and I believe a man who is able-bodied should work for a living."

Now thirty-eight, the gritty Norwegian is the owner, designer, and sole shipwright in the small but growing Omundson Boat Works at Pt. Reyes Station, California, thirty-five miles northwest of the Golden Gate.

Muffled in quiet fog, the lively workshop is in an old garage which John outfitted with everything needed for building boats, including a battery of power tools—which he operates as efficiently today as he did before losing

his sight.

The whole remarkable project was accomplished, with state aid and loans evenly matched by John's determination, only six months after he had finished braille and cane travel instruction at the Orientation Center for the Blind in Albany, California.

It's a real heart-stopper, however, to watch John feed heavy boat lumber into a sinister, skirling band saw and turn out intricate cuts, curves, angled scarves, and reverse bevels. To John it is just one chore in his regular, eight-hour work day, with time out to walk home for lunch and back with Sheila, a gentle, part shepherd family pet, who is company for John, but not his seeing-eyes. He only requires his white cane for direction.

"Yes, I was nervous when I first tried the power tools," John recalls. "But now I use them everyday—with the proper respect of course."

When John was three years old, he moved with his parents from Portland to Astoria, where he grew up loving the sea and the ships that sail them. Years later he learned the diminishing art of boatbuilding in the Columbia River yards. Nearly twenty years ago he started his apprenticeship with builder Joseph M. Dyer at the same place where his father, John Omundson, had been recognized for years as a skilled boatwright and who set a great record in the construction of

mine-sweepers during World War II.

James D. Omundson, the Pt. Reyes' man's only brother, partly followed in the family tradition. But instead of building boats, he's a dry land building contractor in Lake Oswego.

In two decades of boatbuilding, John has worked at everything from salvage to layout work. John and his father built the E. H. Carruther's famed Ebbtide, then teamed up on the major portion of the work on the Patronilla of Portland.

John later worked in pleasure boat yards in Seattle and helped construct the ocean-going yacht Chrysopyle in Sausalito, California. Just before he lost his eyesight, John joined another shipwright, and they built the elegant sloop Galatea.

"God has provided for all of my needs and most of my wants," John says. "But it was the comprehensive training my father gave me as a boy that gave me the nerve to stay in the boat-building game after going blind."

Silhouetted against the salt-spray roll and roar of the Pacific Ocean, the husky, fourth-generation shipwright is quick to tell you why he is lucky. "I have a wonderful wife, Doris, and two teen-age children—all pulling for me—plus good health and a good trade."

Doris is a warm, unassuming helpmate with abundant courage to match

John's. She works as park technician for the National Park Service at the Pt. Reyes Seashore.

John has almost finished a 16-foot Great Pelican which was designed by Capt. William Short of Larkspur, California, and is being built for George Richardson, an insurance executive in Phoenix. Richardson entrusted the entire project to John via long distance telephone calls early in 1969, and they will meet for the first time when he arrives at Pt. Reyes to pick up his boat.

John's blind perseverance also figures in the most ambitious construction job of his life so far, the design and building of a strapping, 24-foot open sportfishing boat. With its double-end modified bustle stern, the sportfisher is all handfitted heavy construction and joinery and was completed after months of frustrations and setbacks.

"But her hull will last fifty years," John says confidently. And even a land-locked, non-sailor is convinced, for it is built by the same methods of hand assembly used by Scandinavian boatbuilders since the Vikings swarmed the seas of northern Europe 2000 years ago in ships still unmatched for workmanship and endurance. The sturdy bustle-stern (the bustle prevents her from squatting when the power is turned on) will haul six in comfort at eight to ten knots on seas of any temper.

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## BLIND SKY DIVER

by

Charles Buell

Sonny Yates of Long Beach, California is a most unusual person in a number of ways. Here we will dwell on his sky diving because at present there may not be another blind person participating in this dangerous activity. It is hoped the trail he is blazing will open the way for others. In any event, he has inspired many people.

To sky dive one must have courage and the necessary skills, and he must also have a license. Sonny Yates, D-986, has all of these prerequisites. Before losing his vision he had jumped about three hundred and forty times. Then he became blind and had to renew his license from the California State Aeronautics Board. As one might expect it was extremely difficult to convince the Board to issue a license to a blind man. Sonny says that it was the most difficult obstacle to overcome in his entire jumping career. Finally, the Board acted favorably, and Sonny has made about 160 jumps during the past four years.

As a blind sky diver Sonny performs as well or better than when he had vision. Three years ago he won a large trophy at Elsinore for coming within six inches of the center of the landing area, after jumping from an altitude of 7,500 feet. In

1968 at the Pan American Games in Mexico he won a second place in sky diving. He has jumped from 22,000 feet, made a difficult mid-air rendezvous with a fellow parachutist, and made ten water jumps at sea. He always packs his own parachute.

How does Sonny do it? He receives his directions from the ground via helmet-contained radio unit that he has been working with others to improve. Sonny makes better use of this equipment than do most others who largely depend upon getting basic information through the eyes. From experience he has learned that a parachute begins to collapse about fifty feet above the ground. This is enough warning to make safe landings. Sonny feels that the loss of vision has made him more aware of the position of the parts of his body during a dive. Before the loss of vision Sonny took such matters for granted.

With a few exceptions, a blind person can do anything anyone else can do. Sonny's motto is, "It can be done if you want to do it." Do you doubt it?

NBC Television News, the *Sky Diver*, and other publications have told Sonny Yates' story.

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## TWO AMERICAN BROTHERHOOD VOLUNTEERS HONORED BY PRESIDENT

by  
Haig Keropian

[Reprinted from the Van Nuys (California) News.]

President Richard M. Nixon has expressed his appreciation to two Valley residents—Jean Scott Neel and Rocky Spicer— for “exceptional services” in their efforts to provide knowledge for those without sight, as well as for those who are living in a world of both darkness and silence.

Special presidential citations were sent to Mrs. Neel and Spicer, whose contributions are being made through Twin Vision, the publishing division of the American Brotherhood of the Blind.

Mrs. Neel is the author-illustrator of Twin Vision books which feature raised illustrations—books which enable sighted parents to share rewarding experiences with their blind children, or vice versa.

Spicer is the editor of *Hot Line*, a newsletter which is sent to the deaf-blind in fifty states and twenty-five countries throughout the world twice a month.

Both recipients have been cited on numerous occasions for their volunteer work, and both have received Twin Vision Golden Book Awards.

In addition, their efforts have contributed to the record which has earned Twin Vision two annual George Washington Honor Medals from the Freedom Foundation at Valley Forge.

Mrs. Neel has been affiliated with

Twin Vision since 1961. She is the author-illustrator of Twin Vision books *SHAPE OF THINGS--BIRDS, AT THE TABLE, WHERE DOES AN APPLE COME FROM?* and others.

Twin Vision has received high tributes for its *ANTHOLOGY OF GREAT DOCUMENTS*--including Thomas Jefferson's First Inaugural Address, the Monroe Doctrine, Lincoln's House Divided speech, the Emancipation Proclamation and the Gettysburg Address.

Spicer is district director in charge of public relations for the United States Steel Corporation. He is an alumnus of the University of Southern California and a past president of the Los Angeles chapter of Sigma Delta Chi Professional Journalistic Society.

He currently is a director of both Sigma Delta Chi and the Greater Los Angeles Press Club. He also is a member of the Valley Press Club.

Spicer has volunteered his services as editor of *Hot Line* since its inception in 1964. It keeps the deaf-blind informed on what is happening throughout the world.

Featuring between sixteen and twenty-four pages in braille, each issue is mailed to readers in fifty states as well as in Australia, British Honduras, Canada, Ceylon, England, Fiji, Hong Kong, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Kowloon,

Malawi, Malaysia, Mexico, Nigeria, Philippine Islands, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Scotland, South Vietnam, Turkey, West Pakistan and Zambia.

Signed by President Nixon, the certificates cite Mrs. Neel and Spicer "in

recognition of exceptional service to others, in the finest American tradition."

The work of the two recipients also was commended by Jean Dyon Norris, director of Twin Vision since the organization's inception nine years ago.

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## THE WASHINGTON CONVENTION

by  
A. A. Fisher

The 1970 convention of the Washington State Association of the Blind lost no time getting under way following opening ceremonies presided over by Ed Renz, President of the Grays Harbor Chapter of the WSAB. The invocation was given by Father O'Shea. Mayor Youmans of Hoquiam gave a warm welcome to the delegates assembled in the Emerson Hotel, Hoquiam, for the three-day conclave, July 30 through August 1.

The sixty-five delegates representing local affiliates in the State, came together to hammer out a program for the coming year. President Cecil Phillips in his opening remarks noted that progress had been made toward consolidating the organization during the past year, and called for further strengthening the local affiliates, the Washington State Association, and the National Federation of the Blind.

President Phillips particularly emphasized the possible threat to State Services for the Blind inherent in the new super-agency in the process of coming into being in this State. This new agency,

known as the Health and Social Services Agency, is headed by Sidney Smith, formerly Director of the Department of Public Assistance. President Phillips pointed out that the blind could be lost in the shuffle, with State Services for the Blind fragmented and parcelled out to general, all-inclusive departments. The convention later unanimously adopted a resolution from the King County Association of the Blind, calling for a separate and distinct Commission for the Blind, which would give greater opportunity for participation of the blind themselves in determining programs to meet their needs. The Commission as proposed would administer all services affecting blind persons in this State. The next session of the State Legislature will be called upon to establish the Commission as proposed.

A highlight of the convention was the granting of a charter to a new affiliate in King County, the University Association of the Blind. The new chapter was represented by its President, Sue Anderson, a student at the University of Washington. The new chapter, primarily

oriented toward students and young workers will not be limited to student membership. With some 1700 blind people in King County, the new group expects to recruit many new members, and will be a real asset to WSAB and NFB.

Other actions of the convention included adoption of a resolution in support of efforts to continue and expand the Tape Recording and Transcribing Service now operating at the State Rehabilitation for the Blind in Seattle. This service provides taped text books and technical material needed by students and other blind persons in the State. At the present time the Taping Service is being operated without pay by Carl Jarvis, President of King County Association of the Blind, pending action on applications made by State Services for the Blind for either State or Federal funding.

Another resolution adopted by the convention established a goal of organizing at least two new affiliates in the State and for doubling the membership of the Association in the coming year. In a further action the convention called for more cooperation and joint efforts with other organizations active in service to the blind, such as the Lions Clubs, to eliminate detrimental competition and overlapping.

The convention heard a detailed, comprehensive report from Wesley Osborne, Legislative Education Chairman, on the status of projects for the coming session of the legislature. These will be

worked out in more detail as the session nears. Included are possible changes affecting vending stand operations as a result of Congressional consideration of amendments to the Randolph Shepherd Act, and measures to redefine resources, to prevent reduction to Aid to the Blind when increased benefits are voted by Congress.

One session of the convention was devoted to a seminar on local organizations and what can be done. It was conducted by John Taylor, member of the Board of the National Federation of the Blind, and Assistant Director of the Iowa Commission for the Blind. He was assisted by Kenneth Hopkins, Director of the Idaho Commission for the Blind. Mr. Taylor replaced Kenneth Jernigan, President of N.F.B., whose scheduled appearance was cancelled due to other pressing business.

The convention adjourned at noon Saturday following election of officers and naming Spokane as the site of the 1971 convention. President Cecil Phillips was unanimously elected for a second term in the office for which he was chosen in the Yakima convention last year. Other officers were: Sue Anderson, Vice-President; Kathy Colley, Secretary; and Berl Colley, Treasurer. Committee Chairmen elected were: Carl Jarvis, Public Relations; Wesley Osborne, (re-elected) Legislation; Robert Sellers, Organization; Robert Keppler, (re-elected) Welfare; and Marie Lemke, Publications. The Ways and Means chairmanship was left open.

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## LIFE BUILT ON TRUST

by

Richard Maschal

[Reprinted from the Charlotte (North Carolina) *Observer*.]

The cow bell tied on the door lets out a dull clank as a customer enters the store and Clarence Collins jumps to his feet and calls "Hello."

The woman has just helped herself to five dollars' worth of gas from one of the two pumps out front. She tells Collins that, hands him a bill, tells him it's ten dollars and gets a five dollar bill in return.

It's a simple business transaction that Collins is party to many times every day, except, once again, he affirms his trust in people.

For him, trust is not some abstraction but a bread and butter reality on which his livelihood depends.

You see, Collins couldn't tell if it was a ten or a one dollar bill the woman handed him. He's blind. So he trusts people, the customers who come into his gas station, grocery and hardware store on Statesville Avenue. And in forty years of business, he's been gypped very few times.

Of course, having been in the game that long, Collins, sixty-six, is not without his resources. "It takes a bit of deduction to handle that," like he says.

"If she didn't know me, she wouldn't have said anything. If she'd been a stranger, I might have told her I didn't have the change, but the fact that she told me what the bill was--she knew me."

Sitting behind the counter of his store--chock full of canned goods, candy, hardware, soda pop and beer--Collins eases into a smile. He sees nothing particularly remarkable in all this.

Sure, he has to trust people, but as he points out, if he couldn't, he would have been out of business a long time ago.

Collins sees himself as an average guy, a guy who doesn't hide his blindness, but also doesn't wave it like a flag or let it interfere with living.

He's a guy who switched from Camels to filter cigarettes a few months ago and gets less than full satisfaction from the Winstons and Kools he constantly fits into his holder, a guy who joshes the kids buying pop and candy bars; a guy who's getting up in years and can remember Bible verses he learned as a child, but not what his wife told him yesterday.

In short, Collins gets along just fine, thank you, managing the store even when his wife, who usually is there, takes an afternoon off to attend a funeral.

The store is his world, tuned to his rhythm. Need masking tape? He goes right to the counter where it's located. A Pepsi? He fishes it out of the cooler, and, like a magician pulling a rabbit from a hat, he rarely misses. He knows the contours of all the bottles but gets stymied by the

sameness of beer cans.

"I have a general idea where everything is. I don't know exactly sometimes. I don't remember prices, but we mark everything. Now a can of tomatoes looks just like a can of beans to me, so I depend on customers to help me tell which is which."

Trust has been a necessity since he lost his sight at age seven while playing with a dynamite blasting cap. Trust and just plain taking care of himself.

There were no government or private agencies to help the blind when he finished school in his native Lillington, so he lived on a farm, doing chores--for four years.

Then in 1926, Collins made a then unheard-of move. He came to Charlotte and got a job with an automobile dealer working until he was laid off in 1930.

Collins had saved some money, so he and his bride bought a store on Statesville Avenue and a few years later moved up the road to his present location, just a way past I-85.

It was rough back then during the depression, and Collins and his wife, living in two rooms behind the store, stayed open from 7 a.m. until midnight to make a go of it.

He also made and remade mattresses, and, after a time when his three children "got big enough where they could walk around and tear the store apart," he built his present place right next door and a house out back.

Collins prospered, but there was one time he got taken, and taken good. When asked about it, he says, "I'm ashamed to tell it almost."

Three men came into the store and one got Collins to come to the door to listen to his car engine, claiming he was having trouble with his car. While he was standing in the doorway, the engine racing loudly, the other men cleaned out the cash register.

He learned from that one, and, like he says. "I might have been fortunate. They might have hit me on the head."

The hard times largely behind him, Collins now has time for leisure pursuits, digging holes all over the yard for planting at his wife's direction, and reading in braille the *Reader's Digest*, *Changing Times*, and *The Monitor*.

There is something else, something close to his heart that demands much time for writing letters and such. He is president of the Tar Heel Federation of the Blind, begun last August and now grown to one hundred and fifteen members.

"The key word in that is 'of' instead of 'for'. Blind people know better than anyone else what they need, what they want, and what they can do."

Collins feels many people unintentionally discriminate against blind people simply because they don't understand them, and he feels many well intentioned people who want to help should give blind people a voice in their own affairs.

"Sighted people don't give the blind man a chance," he says.

Collins, self-sufficient, is dedicated to educating people about blindness.

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## IDAHO CONVENTION

by

Ramona Walhof

Success leads to growing strength and greater gains. Perhaps no organization better demonstrates the truth of this statement than the Gem State Blind. The 1970 Gem State Blind convention brought out even more clearly than before that the creation of the Idaho Commission for the Blind, a very great achievement indeed, has given the Gem State Blind higher goals and has speeded up the rate at which these goals can be expected to be attained.

The 35th annual convention of the Gem State Blind was held in Boise on the weekend of August 7-9 at the Plaza Inn.

The convention program featured a number of distinguished guests. Representing the National Federation was Manuel Urena, Assistant Director in charge of Orientation at the Iowa Commission for the Blind and NFB Board Member and Resolutions Chairman. Mr. Urena played a major role—giving advice and answering questions throughout the weekend. He discussed current NFB activities and stressed the dangers of over-specialization in the field of teaching and counselling the blind. These specialists want to take responsibility for every word and action of their blind clients. We must face this problem and Mr. Urena showed how the NFB is dealing with it.

Also featured on the program was Kenneth Hopkins, Director of the Idaho Commission for the Blind, who reported on the progress and plans of the Commission. In the three years since its establishment the Commission has made remarkable progress in spite of cramped quarters. The state organization resolved to assist in gaining a total resource building for the Commission. Buildings are presently available in Boise which would be adequate and suitable and we intend to have one. The expansion of programs serving the blind will require a larger budget and we will assist the Commission in its effort to secure increases. We in Idaho are proud of the accomplishments of the Commission and its director, Kenneth Hopkins.

Mrs. Elmer Parke, Principal of the Blind Department of the Idaho School for the Deaf and Blind, reported on progress at the school and their need for a new building. Bill Hallock of the Lions reported on the establishment of the Idaho-Oregon Lions Sight Conservation Foundation which, in less than a year of existence, has already begun to supply eyes. After a tour of Boise's vending stands, Dick Jones, Vending-Stand Supervisor, explained state and national laws concerning stands. The convention resolved to obtain passage of the Little

Randolph-Shepherd Act based on the model law now in force in Iowa.

In other business, the convention called for the establishment of an advisory committee consisting of members of the State group, the Commission for the Blind, and the School for the Deaf and Blind, which would concern itself with the programs serving blind adults and children. Kenneth Hopkins indicated that he fully supported the move and would do all in his power as Commission director to assist in establishing such a committee. As a result of the growth and dynamic changes in our organization, and following the leadership of the NFB at its national Convention, we voted to update and revise our State constitution to bring it into conformity with the new national constitution.

A gratifying event was the distribution of the first copies of our new brochure explaining the programs of the Gem State Blind. It is an attractive document and congratulations go to the committee which worked long and hard on its development. Copies of the brochure may be obtained from Mrs. Uldine Thelander, 1929 Manitou Avenue, Boise, Idaho, 83706.

The highlight of the convention was the annual Saturday night banquet. Manuel Urena was the main speaker and

his thought-provoking yet rousing address received a thunderous ovation from members and guest legislators. Mrs. Bonnie Whittig, corresponding secretary, read a letter from NFB President Kenneth Jernigan commending State president Uldine Thelander for her years of untiring effort for the blind of Idaho and her steadfast loyalty to the NFB. This letter was sent as the result of a unanimous resolution passed at the recent national Convention. It marks Mrs. Thelander's retirement from the Executive Board of the NFB. We in Idaho are especially proud of Uldine Thelander.

President Thelander presented a charter to our sixth local chapter. Lonnie Price, representing the Panhandle Chapter (geographically centered in Coeur d'Alene and stretching north through Idaho's panhandle to Canada), accepted the charter. Idaho has doubled its number of local chapters in the last three years.

As in past years the Boise Bench Lions cooked a fine Sunday morning breakfast for the membership before the convention broke up.

The 1970 Gem State Blind convention was a success because we got a lot of work done; we learned a lot; we took away with us renewed energy and determination; and we all had plenty of fun.

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## NO MORE TIN CUPS

by  
Sam Day

[Reprinted from the Idaho *Intermountain Observer*.]

"You can drown in syrup just as easily as you can drown in vinegar," says Manuel Urena, a firebrand who came to Idaho to stoke the coals of one of the State's few revolutionary movements.

Urena, of Des Moines, Iowa, is an executive of the National Federation of the Blind. He spoke in Boise at the annual convention of the Gem State Blind, which is an organization of blind people.

Like other leaders of the federation, including its President, Kenneth Jernigan, who fired up the association at its meeting two years ago, Urena is a member of a new breed of blind people who believe in asserting themselves and standing up for their rights.

The federation members don't use the term, but some have called it a "blind power" movement. The essence of the movement is a desire to break loose from the grip of well-meaning sighted people who think they know what's best for the blind but really don't.

The villains in Urena's world aren't the sort who want to lynch the blind or keep them out of the neighborhood or make them move to the back of the bus. They are quite the opposite: sweet, syrupy people who patronize the blind, feel sorry for them, protect them from life's troubles, help them across the street and insist upon running their lives for them.

Those are the real enemies, in Urena's view. They include psychologists, social workers, special education people and other certified experts on problems of the blind. And many of them hold policy making positions in state and federal agencies which are supposed to rehabilitate the blind.

Urena refers with scorn to experts with 20/20 vision who produce training manuals for the blind in such subjects as how to open a door, how to load peas on a fork, and how to comb the hair. The blind don't need kindergarten exercises, he says; they need pretty much what any sighted person needs: a school system which produces a good education, an economy which produces sufficient jobs.

Inspired by men like Urena, Jernigan, and the late Jacobus tenBroek, who, as founder of the National Federation, is the George Washington of the modern blind power movement in America, the organized blind have literally thrown away their tin cups in the last decade, demanding a greater say in public programs designed for their benefit.

One of the symptoms of the revolution was Idaho's 1967 revolt of the blind, in which programs for the blind were taken out from under the thumb of the State Department of Public Assistance and placed by the Legislature in a newly created Idaho Blind Commission.

One of the prime movers was a veteran battler for the blind, Uldine Thelander of Boise, still president of the Gem State Blind, who has since won national recognition for her leadership in helping to create the commission.

And one of the dividends of the revolt was the recruitment of the commission's first executive secretary, Kenneth Hopkins, a young Iowan who was reared in the tradition of tenBroek and Jernigan. Under Hopkins' direction, the commission has broken new ground in mobility training, counseling, vocational education and other programs designed to enable blind men and women to stand on their own feet.

Working through their association and State commission, the blind of Idaho intend to keep pushing in the coming months. Their top priority in the next Legislature is the securing of a larger building to house their operations. The present cramped quarters severely restrict the number of trainees.

Also on the agenda is closer coordination with the State School for the Deaf & Blind at Gooding. At its convention the association called for establishment of a coordinating committee to be made up of representatives of the school, the commission, and the organized blind.

Education of blind children has still been relatively untouched by the revolution which has transformed programs for the adult blind in Idaho. The Gooding school, operated as an afterthought by the State Board of Education, remains a quaint anachronism, with a curriculum well below the level of many Idaho schools. Among the State's school districts, only Boise makes a stab at educating blind children.

But if the momentum continues, blind children sooner or later will reap the benefits which are now being secured by their blind elders.

\* \* \* \* \*

## MINNESOTA'S RADIO TALKING BOOK

by  
Marilyn Miller

John turned on the Radio Talking Book, not wanting to miss the last chapter of the Agatha Christie novel being aired on the 10:00 p.m. program, *Off the Shelf*. When the program ended, he dug in his pocket and handed his wife a dime. She had won the bet. It had been the prudish Miss Barron. He had been so sure the gardener was guilty.

"The Twins win today?" he asked his wife.

"I don't know, but it should be on *Newspaper Readings* in the morning."

John's source of entertainment and sports news was the Radio Talking Book Network, a broadcast service recently

established by Minnesota State Services for the Blind for visually and physically handicapped persons in Minnesota. Broadcasting seventeen hours a day, three hundred and sixty-five days a year, the Radio Talking Book is presenting a varied selection of current information, and is presenting it on a daily basis.

The broadcast day begins at seven a.m. with the morning newspapers and ends at midnight with *For Men and Some Women*, a program presenting the more rugged novels of interest to men--and some women, as the program title indicates.

During the day, the listener may choose from programs featuring live discussions, particularly with local personalities, and featuring print materials of all kinds. The *P.M. Report*, for example, covers issues of the day in depth. Recent broadcasts have included the *Environmental Handbook*, the *Walker Report* and a book dealing with the pros and cons of the draft.

Women listeners can pick up household hints on *At Home* or *In the Kitchen* or they can relax with a good story on *Come Read With Me*, a program featuring stories from current women's magazines.

After-school hours are devoted to children on *Stories 'n Stuff* and to teenagers on *Color Me In*. *May We Present* introduces listeners to interesting people in the public eye and still other programs feature histories or short stories or best sellers.

Special emphasis is placed on programs of local interest--State and city politics, history, sports, education--to keep

listeners abreast of the most current information concerning their immediate community.

In addition, there are programs to answer the particular questions Radio Talking Book listeners might have. What new legislation has been enacted through the efforts of the organized blind? What new training programs and facilities are being offered through the State and voluntary agencies? Where are the particular State Agency offices located? To answer these and other questions, the Radio Talking Book regularly transmits readings from the publications of the organized blind. It regularly presents discussions with participants in the various programs around the city and State, and it suggests where additional information can be found.

Minnesota State Services for the Blind, Radio Talking Book's chief sponsor, is responsible for overall management of the service and more particularly is responsible for preparation and presentation of material. The Hamm Foundation of St. Paul (A long-time supporter of State Agency services) provides major financial support as do the Rochester (Minnesota) Foundation and other public and private contributors. More than eighty-five volunteers supply both live and taped broadcasts in Radio Talking Book's two studios.

Organization of such a service requires very careful planning and coordination. It requires that technical facilities be selected to produce a continuous high level of service and reception. It requires that volunteers be screened, tested and reviewed to produce programs of constant high quality. It

requires careful coordination of distribution and maintenance of receivers so that as many participants as possible can make use of the facility. Finally, it requires careful central coordination to assure that all parts of the program work together to produce one effective whole.

Studios are located in St. Paul, Minnesota and in Collegeville, Minnesota on the campus of St. John's University. St. Paul studios, in the Communication Center of the State Agency, are the main center of operation for the Radio Talking Book.

Specially designed receivers must be used to receive Radio Talking Book broadcasts which are aired on a special subcarrier. This subcarrier is a frequently unused capability of FM radio transmitters. The FM transmitters used by Radio Talking Book are owned and operated by Minnesota Educational Radio, Inc.

The Radio Talking Book is a new kind of Talking Book, a book that talks all day. Minnesota's State Agency provides the service with the idea that daily access to such a selection of material is the right of the participant. The second right of the participant, and equally important in any good program, is the right to choose which part of the service, if any, he will use.

The directions which accompany every Radio Talking Book receiver reveal those two basic rights. "We are presenting the full breadth of material available to people who read visually since we believe

this exposure is your right. . . . Materials are selected for their availability and popularity. . . . and will not be edited for content or vocabulary. . . . If you read with an earphone, you will have the freedom to read in privacy as print readers do without others judging the content of the material you choose to hear. . . . You will learn to turn on what you like and off what you do not want to hear."

Finally, the directions say, "Enjoy your Radio Talking Book." The visual reader chooses a book or magazine to inform himself of the world around him, to refresh himself with a laugh, to get information about his special interest or simply to relax with a good story. Radio Talking Book listeners have that same kind of choice.

Note: The first large public demonstration of Radio Talking Book Network facilities was given on July 6 at the Convention of the National Federation of the Blind in Minneapolis.

In keeping with the national trends toward localization in broadcasting, the Radio Talking Book Network is a Minnesota-based service provided for Minnesota listeners. If you are considering a radio service for your geographical area, you may address questions concerning technology, programming, cost or volunteer reader and staff selection to:

Communications Center  
State Services for the Blind  
1745 University Avenue  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55104

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## THE TENBROEK MEMORIAL FUND

In 1956 the National Federation of the Blind established an endowment fund for the purpose of acquiring capital which would eventually produce sufficient income to finance the work of the Federation. In recent years the Federation has allocated some \$200,000 to the endowment fund, including several thousands of dollars which were contributed in memory of Dr. Jacobus tenBroek. In 1968 the Convention adopted a resolution establishing the name of the endowment fund as the Dr. Jacobus tenBroek Memorial Endowment Fund.

From time to time contributions have been made to the fund by individuals and affiliates. At the 1970 Minneapolis Convention, many individuals gave and a number of affiliates pledged amounts to the fund. We wish to take this opportunity to thank those who gave for their contributions to this worthy cause. We would also like to take this opportunity to

urge all affiliates, pledged and otherwise, to meet their obligation to advance the work of the Federation by contributing to the Dr. Jacobus tenBroek Memorial Fund.

Resolution 70-05 adopted by the Convention in Minneapolis urges "that at every convention of every affiliate pledges of donations be requested, donations be collected from individuals attending, and appropriations for the Jacobus tenBroek Memorial Endowment Fund be voted." Federationists are asked to remember the endowment fund in their wills and bequests and to ask attorneys to suggest the Dr. Jacobus tenBroek Memorial Endowment Fund to their clients when making out their wills. Federationists, chapters, and affiliates can help by sending donations to the endowment fund on those occasions when one might send flowers to honor a friend or member of the organization. Checks should be made payable to the NFB Endowment Fund.

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## MONITOR MINIATURES

HELP! We have been too free in sending out back issues of *The Monitor* and now find that we have no copies at all of some issues and mighty few of many others. The missing issues are listed below and if any of our readers find they have them and can spare them, please send them to 2652 Shasta Road, Berkeley, California 94708. As it is now, we are in a pretty embarrassing situation. The issues needed are:

### INK

February	1958
March	1958
February	1959
March	1959
February	1960
July	1963
February	1964
March	1964
May	1964

June	1964
July	1964
November	1964
December	1965
January	1966
April	1968
May	1968
August	1968

#### BRAILLE

December	1964
August	1967
October	1967
November	1967
December	1967
June	1969
September	1969

#### TALKING BOOK

November	1968
June	1969
July	1969

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We have this note from Lyle Neff, Recording Secretary for the Colorado Federation of the Blind: "We would like the NFB and *Monitor* readers to know that as of April first, 1970, Colorado Federation has been publishing a monthly newsletter. Colorado has seven affiliates and each affiliate sends information they would like in the newsletter to Lyle Neff, editor. The news is then compiled and edited. I then send a typewritten copy of the newsletter to Pat Jones, Correspondence Secretary for Colorado who makes mimeographed copies for mailing throughout the State. I would like to hear from other editors of state newsletters in braille, by tape (any speed, any tracking), or by cassette. Let's all get

acquainted and compare ideas. Send all correspondence to Lyle Neff, 942 South York Street, Denver, Colorado 80209."

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A new mode of written communication for the blind has been invented. Soft plastic paper is embossed by pressing heavily with a big ball point pen or blunt pencil, and the raised writing can be felt with the fingertips. Conventional letters and numbers are used. Ruth L. Barr of Webster Groves, Missouri reported the new method in the technical journal *Science*. The paper is made of polyethylene plastic material. Printed letters a half-inch high are used. A newly-blinded person can almost immediately write numbers and letters he has always known. With the use of this new paper, the sighted and the blind can readily communicate.

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Senator Bob Dole of Kansas has introduced S. 4002, creating a National Information and Resource Center for the Handicapped. The function of the Center would be to collect, review, organize, publish, and disseminate information and data related to the particular problems caused by handicapping conditions, including information describing measures which may be employed for meeting and overcoming such problems.

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Touring California recently were thirty young Swedish people, including eleven blind students. The students, who dive for sunken treasure, gave exhibitions of swimming and diving as well as

performances of music. They were guests of the Vasa Order of America, a Swedish cultural and social organization. The visit included a tour of Disneyland, stops in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Sacramento. In the latter city the group were entertained with a swimming party and supper at the home of Henry Negrete and his wife, Carolyn. Henry is the President of the Capitol Chapter, California Council of the Blind.

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There is much activity these days in South Carolina as the program of the Commission for the Blind continues to grow. In a recent meeting of State executives, someone made the remark that the greatest growth in work for the blind during the past few years had occurred in South Carolina. Certainly the great faith placed in a Commission for the Blind by the Aurora Club seems amply justified.

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On their recent record-setting trip into space, the Soviet astronauts conducted eye experiments to determine the effect of prolonged space flights on vision. Vision reliability was sharply reduced after twenty-four hours in space. Weightlessness affected vision by reducing the coordination of the eye muscles.

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Recently the cupboard was bare for Oregon's guide dogs whose owners were receiving public assistance. The State Welfare Administrator called the whole thing a "misunderstanding". County welfare administrators, however, were waving directives from the State Welfare

Office in Salem, which clearly stated that there were to be no further special grants for dog food. Complaints began pouring into the State Commission for the Blind. Subsequently, phone calls were made from Salem, ordering county welfare departments to restore dog food grants for guide dogs.

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Wayne A. Cooper is the weather observer from Lawton, Oklahoma, who reports to Wichita Falls. Cooper is the only blind person in the Nation acting as weather observer, says Wayne Gilley, Mayor of the City of Lawton. The Mayor finds Cooper a very concerned and dependable person. The Mayor and many other citizens of Lawton are working to have Cooper designated as Official Weather Observer of Lawton.

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Luke LaValle, President of the West Covina Chapter of the California Council of the Blind, was recently named "Citizen of the Year" of West Covina, the honor winning him TV appearances. Luke is the captain of the bowling team which won the league championship.

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H. R. 14720 was recently enacted into law by the Congress, continuing the suspension of duties on manganese ore. The Committee on Finance of the U. S. Senate added a new section to the bill extending for four months the period during which states would have to assure aged, blind, and disabled social security beneficiaries who also receive public assistance an increase of at least four

dollars in their combined income from Social Security and welfare payments. It will be recalled that the original exemption of four dollars a month of increases in Social Security benefits as income in determining the grants of recipients of the adult aids became effective in January of this year under the Tax Reform Act of 1969, and this authorization expired in June. Thus, through October thirty-first at least, the exemption will continue. By that time the Congress undoubtedly hopes to make the exemption permanent through some other bill.

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The Northern Nevada Association of the Blind recently held its annual convention and election. The following officers were elected: Tommie Lee, President; Jean Savage, First Vice-President; Carl Clontz, Second Vice-President; James Osmond, Secretary; and Barbara Chapman, Treasurer. The new officers were installed by K. O. Knudson, President of the Nevada Federation of the Blind. The group remains critically aware of the problems encountered by the blind in the State of Nevada as a result of the manner in which the Services for the Blind Division is administered. It expressed appreciation of the support given it by the State affiliate and the National Federation of the Blind.

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An effort to strengthen the Federal ban on age discrimination in employment was announced by the Department of Labor and the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. The law bars job bias against persons between forty and

sixty-five. In announcing the effort, the administrators said that discrimination based on age is fully as perverse and damaging to the economy and to human dignity as is discrimination based on race, sex, or any other arbitrary criteria. They quoted President Nixon's recent statement that "There is no civil right more central to the U. S. system than the right of equal opportunity for jobs, and this Administration is determined to see that this right--so long denied or given lip service--becomes national policy."

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Over a period of five years the blind of India have insisted that the Central Government appoint qualified blind persons to all Government positions on equal footing with sighted applicants. Recently the Home Minister in New Delhi stated that the physically handicapped are entitled to priority III for the purposes of appointment to Class III and IV posts under the Government of India which are filled through the Employment Exchange.

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A blind nineteen-year old sociology major in Long Beach (California) City College is leaving the apartment she has called home for thirteen months because the owners have said it would be more practical for her to leave. And unless she finds a new apartment, there will be no place to bring her new canine roommate when she finishes training with it in San Rafael. "Wherever I go, they say they don't allow pets," says the coed.

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Freedom to choose among

physicians, pharmacists, hospitals, nursing homes, and other providers of medical services is now the right of patients whose medical bills are paid by Medicaid. This is another step toward a single quality of medical care for all Americans, rich or poor. Medicaid, now in operation in fifty-two U. S. jurisdictions, provides medical assistance for more than twelve million needy and low-income individuals who are aged, blind, disabled, or members of families with at least one person dead, absent, or incapacitated.

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The International Federation of the Blind has published a souvenir book entitled "Ceylon Report-1969". It contains a list of delegates and observers to the First Convention of the IFB held in Ceylon last October, and is dedicated to "the honour and memory of Dr. Jacobus tenBroek, scholar, humanitarian and yes, a dreamer, founder of the National Federation of the Blind, USA. His dream? The emancipation of blind persons the world over." The book contains also the Constitution of the IFB, the Convention agenda, and many interesting articles.

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The Federal Department of HEW recently revised its policies regarding fair hearings for applicants and recipients of public assistance. The regulations still require that state agencies continue public assistance payments during the fair hearing process when there is an issue of fact or judgment in the individual case. State or local agencies must also notify the recipient in advance of the proposed action and offer a conference with agency officials. The new policy modifies an earlier regulation which would have become effective on July first, 1970 and which would have required the states to bear the costs of counsel for a recipient during the fair hearing. If states choose to pay the costs of legal counsel, the Federal Government will provide Federal matching funds, but the choice is a matter for state decision. The new regulations combine a requirement for a pre-termination evidentiary hearing set forth by the U. S. Supreme Court in the recent *Goldberg v. Kelly* case, and a provision of the Social Security Act requiring a fair hearing before the state agency.





